STARS OF THE AUDIOBOOK UNIVERSE

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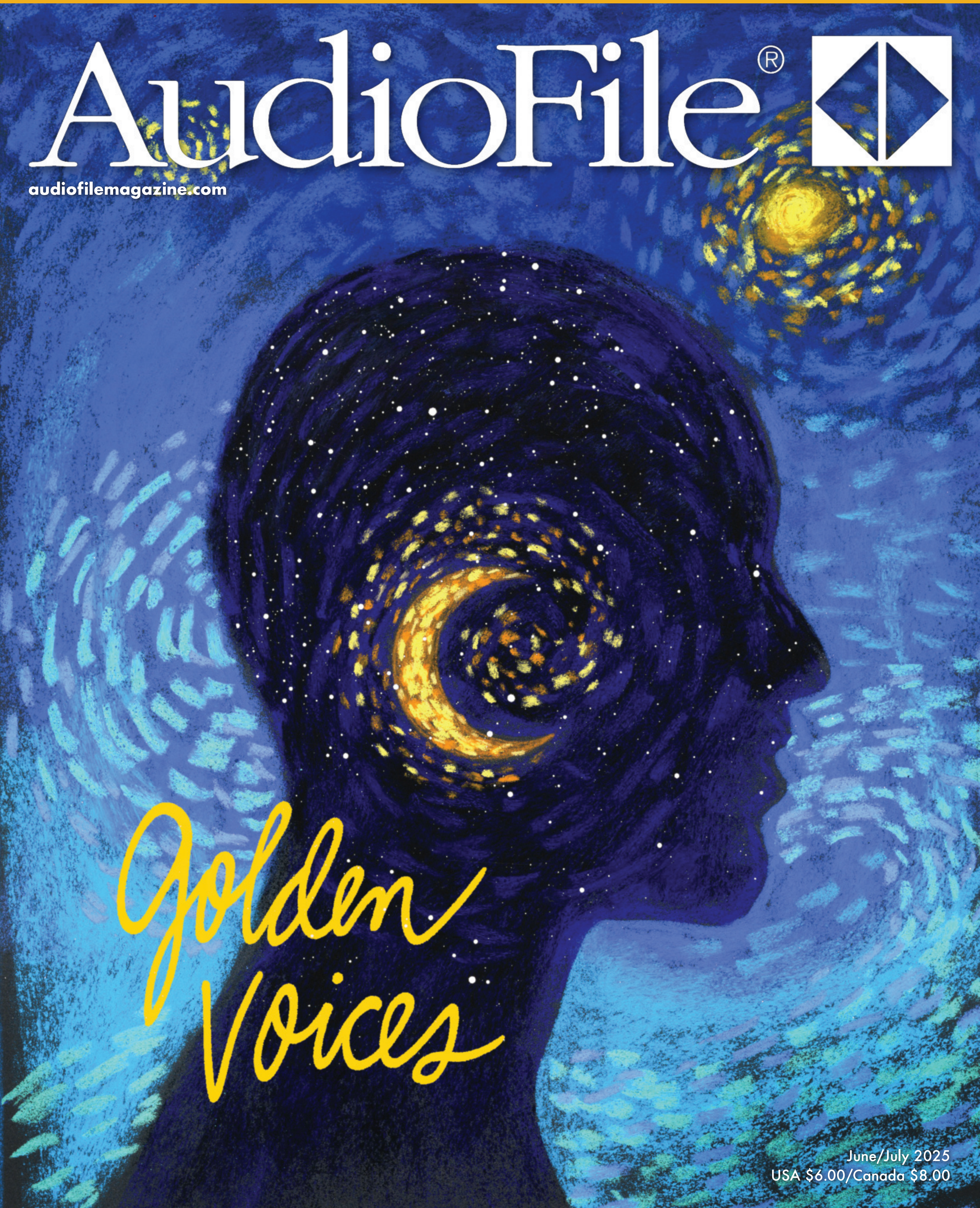
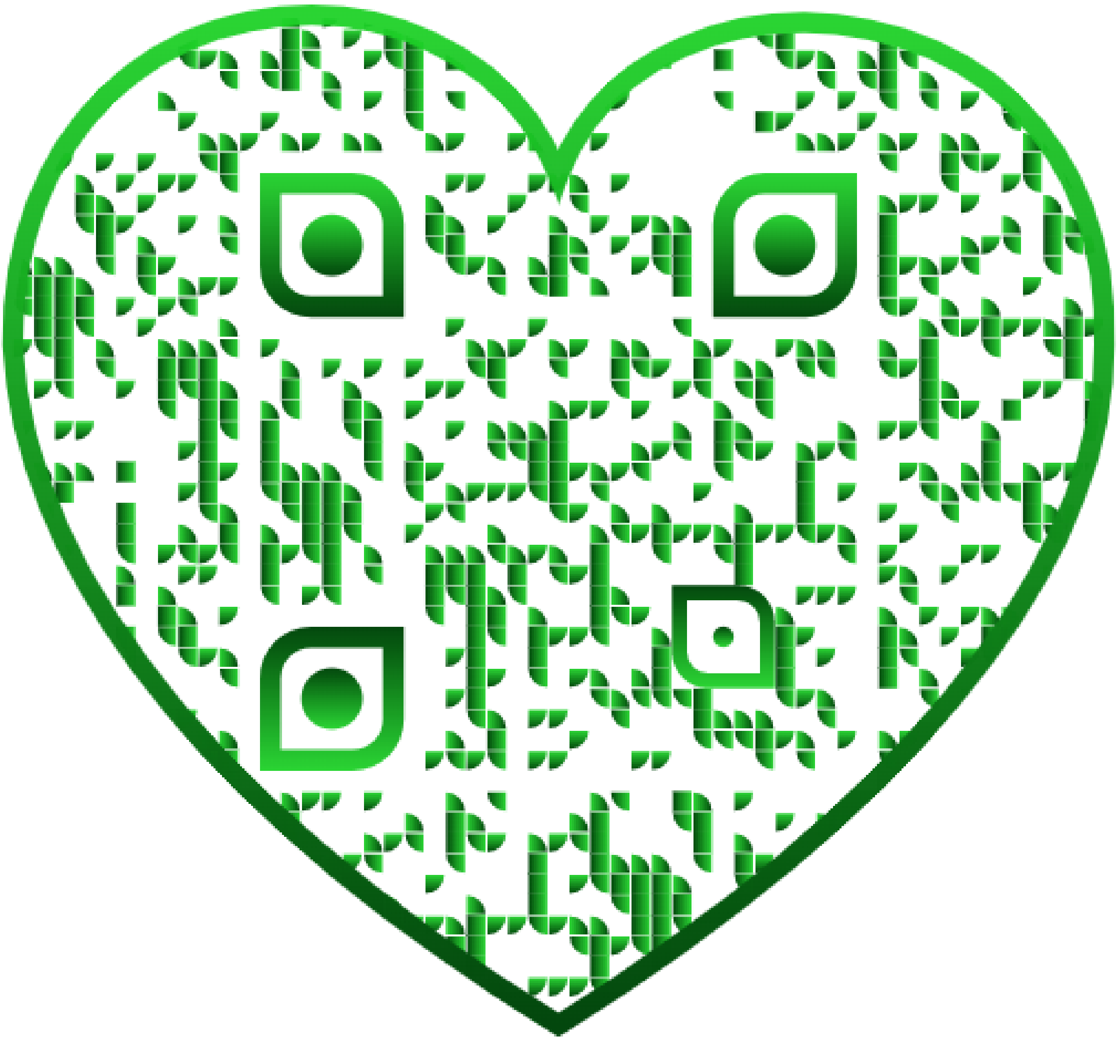
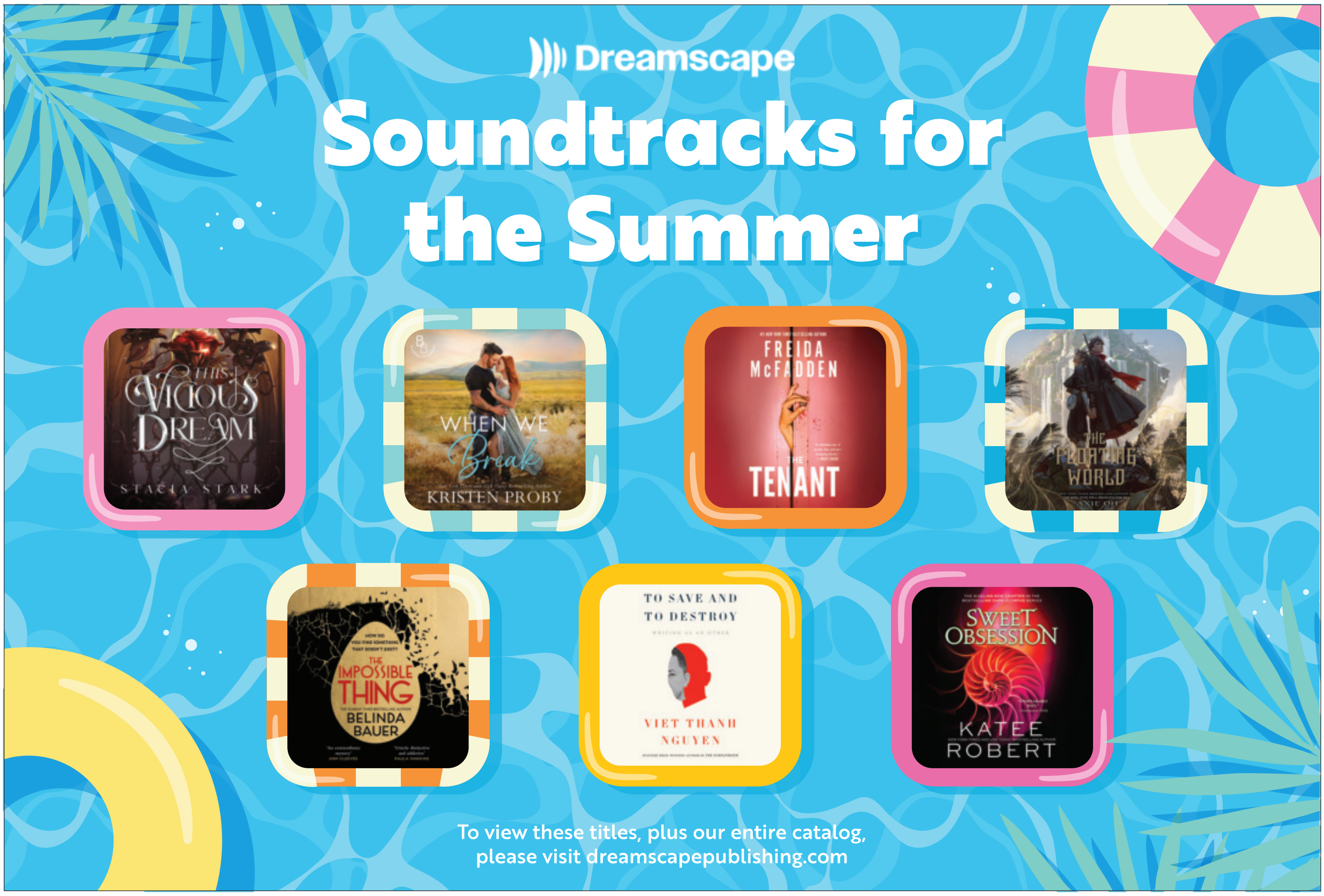


Golden Voices

June/July 2025
USA $6.00/Canada $8.00




Dreamscape

Soundtracks for the Summer

This Vicious Dream
Stacia Stark
When We Break
Kristen Proby
Freida McFadden
The Tenant
The Floating World
Axie Oh
The Impossible Thing
Belinda Bauer
To Save and to Destroy
Writing as an Other
Viet Thanh Nguyen
Sweet Obsession
Katee Robert

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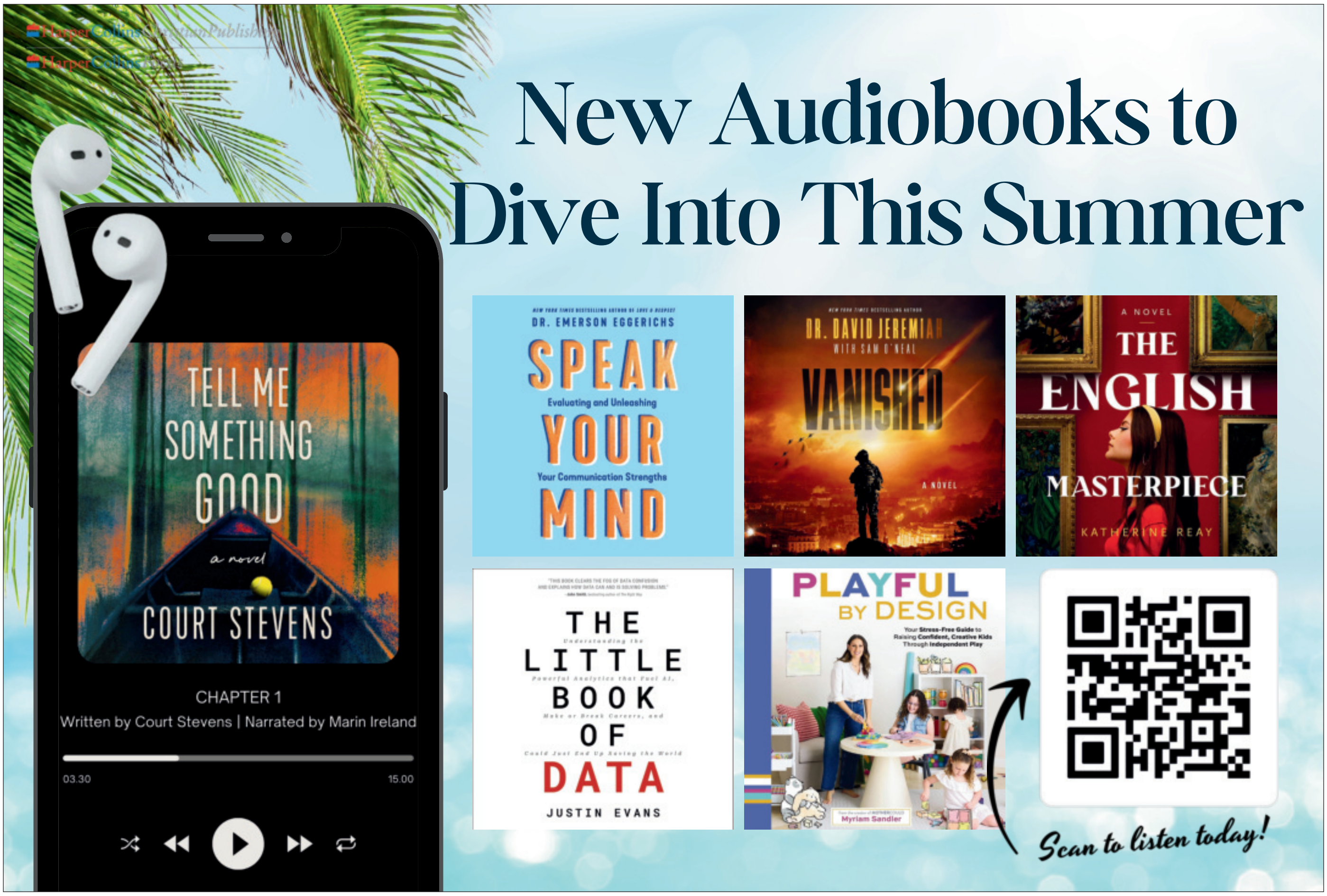
HarperCollins Christian Publishing
HarperCollins

New Audiobooks to Dive Into This Summer

Tell Me Something Good
a novel
Court Stevens
CHAPTER 1
Written by Court Stevens | Narrated by Marin Ireland
03.30
15.00
Dr. Emerson Eggerichs
Speak Your Mind
Evaluating and Unleashing Your Communication Strengths
Dr. David Jeremiah
with Sam O'Neal
Vanished
A Novel
A Novel
The English Masterpiece
Katherine Reay
The Little Book of Data
Justin Evans
Playful by Design
Your Stress-Free Guide to Raising Confident, Creative Kids Through Independent Play
Myriam Sandler

Scan to listen today!

S.A. COSBY
KING OF ASHES
the ENCHANTED GREENHOUSE
SARAH BETH DURST
BURY OUR BONES in the MIDNIGHT SOIL
V. E. SCHWAB
PARK AVENUE
Renée Ahdieh
The OTHER SIDE OF NOW
PAIGE HARBISON
SO GAY FOR YOU
LEISHA HAILEY & KATE MOENNIG
sunny side up
katie sturino
Notes on Infinity
Austin Taylor
Dive into new audiobooks

AVAILABLE FROM MACMILLAN AUDIO

Read by Adam Lazarre-White

Read by Caitlin Davies

Read by Marisa Calin, Katie Leung, & Julia Whelan

Read by Michelle H. Lee

Read by the author

Read by the authors

Read by Yael Rizowy

Read by Helen Laser & Shahjehan Khan

ATMOSPHERE
TAYLOR JENKINS REID
Soundtrack
Jason Reynolds
A WITCH'S GUIDE TO Magical Innkeeping
SANGU MANDANNA
MARK TWAIN
RON CHERNOW
Books that PLAY

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NOTHING
John Cage and the 4'33"
by Nicholas Day; illustrated by Chris Raschka
read by FRED BERMAN
2025 AUDIE AWARD WINNER, YOUNG LISTENERS
"Cage's groundbreaking composition is a big concept for youngsters to wrap their minds around and an unexpected topic for a picture book. But Live Oak's readalong offers a blend of vivid art on the page and a soundscape that connects the listener to both the book and their own personal environment." -Starred Review, BOOKLIST

FARMER EVA'S GREEN GARDEN LIFE
by Jacqueline Briggs Martin; illustrated by Christy Hale
read by EVA KAMINSKY, EVA SOMMARIPA & JACQUELINE BRIGGS MARTIN

CLACK, CLACK! SMACK!
A Cherokee Stickball Story
by Traci Sorell; illustrated by Joseph Erb
read by Draylan Bunch, Scarlett Chanate, Levi Killer, Ryan Livers, Darion Locust, Joshua Mouse, Zebadiah Nofire, Nalayah Oosahwe, Nathan Pritchett, River Shade, Carlos Sorell, and Traci Sorell

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Contributors: Leslie Fine, Jamie Hogan, Robert Kazandjian, Lisa Taylor

AudioFile's Mission

AudioFile reviews unabridged audiobooks, original audio programs, commentary and dramatizations in the spoken-word format. Our focus is the audio presentation, not critique of the written material.

AudioFile reviewers are listeners in the information, education, and performance fields. All reviews are signed.

AudioFile awards Earphones to truly exceptional presentations that excel in all the following criteria:
- Narrative voice and style
- Vocal characterizations
- Appropriateness for the audio format
- Enhancement of the text

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GOLDEN VOICES

Celebrating Exceptional Narrators

On the Cover: Illustration by Jamie Hogan

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L.A. THEATRE WORKS LATW

SUSAN A. LOEWENBERG, PRODUCING DIRECTOR

NEW RELEASE!

"Audio theater at its finest"

—AudioFile Magazine

Tennessee Williams's Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece is one of the most enduring, explosive works in theater. Blanche DuBois (Glenne Headly, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*), once a well-heeled Southern belle but now alcoholic and destitute, arrives in New Orleans to stay with her sister Stella (Amy Brenneman, *Judging Amy*) and her brutish brother-in-law Stanley (Vincent D'Onofrio, *Full Metal Jacket*). And as Stanley terrorizes the fragile Blanche, reality slips slowly away from her.

PLAYS. STARS. OUTSTANDING LISTENS.

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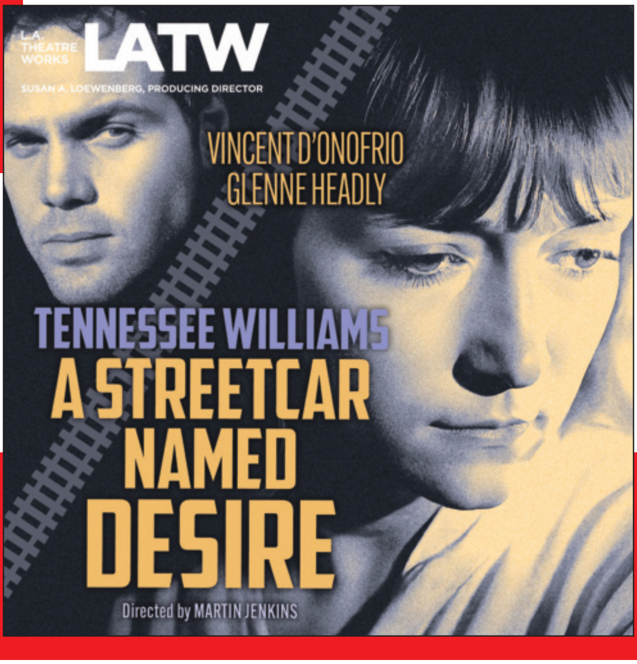
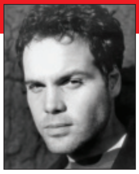
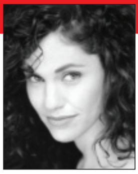

L.A. THEATRE WORKS LATW
SUSAN A. LOEWENBERG, PRODUCING DIRECTOR
VINCENT D'ONOFRIO
GLENNE HEADLY
TENNESSEE WILLIAMS
A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE
Directed by MARTIN JENKINS

Glenne Headly



Vincent D'Onofrio



Amy Brenneman

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS

More Plays by Tennessee Williams

THE GLASS MENAGERIE — Starring Calista Flockhart, Julie Harris

THE ROSE TATTOO — Starring Anthony LaPaglia, Mercedes Ruehl

SUMMER AND SMOKE — Starring Sarah Zimmerman, Armin Shimerman

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Editor's Notes

June and the Audiobook Universe

June is a great month for so many reasons. Our seasons change, young people step into new adventures, families plan excursions during the welcome summer break. In the world of audiobooks, we celebrate the official **Audiobook Month**. With eyes and ears on audiobooks, we announce new 2025 Golden Voices, the brilliant stars of the audiobook universe. (Be sure to look at the stunning cover artwork of this print edition, by Maine artist Jamie Hogan.)

This June we celebrate **Vikas Adam**, **Kimberly Farr**, and **Hillary Huber** as the new class of superstar Golden Voices. Each one of these narrators has dedicated years of work in audiobooks and honed their skills in the craft and magic of audiobook storytelling. It's not just the years, but their attention and focus on their audiobook careers, and the success they achieve across many genres and topics. For countless hours they bend and blend their voices to the stories that authors bring them, teasing out the nuance and drama to give us all exceptional listening.

Our 2025 celebrants join the "Golden 50"—fifty Golden Voice narrators recognized for their excellence since *AudioFile*'s 1992 launch. I hope you explore the work of each voice actor and can *hear* why their contributions to the audiobook universe are so important. Each narrator is a chameleon—a mad poet, a prominent historian, a gay ex-cop, a rapacious food critic, a chicken farmer, a 90-year-old widower, a petulant teen, an ordinary mom—each real and imagined character is delivered to us listeners with heart and understanding. The brilliant works by these human voices have soul and can never be replaced.

Why do we care about Golden Voice narrators? They set the standards of excellence for other narrators. Listeners can experience the highest level of storytelling from these narrators. Maybe we can't always recognize the names, but the proof is in the telling—the excellence of pause, and pace, the beat of storytelling.

You'll know it when you hear it. Please explore the work of our newest Golden Voices—Vikas, Kimberly, Hillary—and all of the Golden Voice narrators through their audiographies, easily found at the *AudioFile* website.

Keep on listening,

Robin Whitten

Robin Whitten
Editor and Founder

AudioFile GOLDEN VOICES

Hillary Huber

Kimberly Farr

Photo by Kevin Brusie

Contributors

Jamie Hogan

Aurelia C. Scott

Coco McCracken

Leslie Fine

Caitlin Augusta

Caitlin Augusta
Contributing Editor Caitlin Augusta ("Tease," page 30, and Abby Jimenez profile, page 32) is a librarian at the Stratford Library in Connecticut. She has reviewed for *AudioFile* since 2006 and judged for the Audies since 2010. She is a longtime Jane Austen fan and romance reader who loves the variety of memorable characters, talented narrators, and happy endings found in romance audio.

Leslie Fine
For 31 years, Leslie Fine (Amal El-Mohtar profile, page 54) has shared her enthusiasm for literature with the students in her high school English classes. After school hours, she can be found doing something creative or outdoorsy—often with family, and other times while listening to audiobooks. She is a longtime reviewer for *AudioFile*.

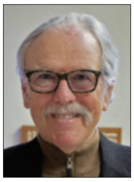
Jamie Hogan
Jamie Hogan (cover illustration) is an award-winning illustrator and author living on Peaks Island. She is a member of the Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance and the Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators and writes a column on the arts for the *Peaks Island News*. See her work at **jamiehogan.com**.

Coco McCracken
Coco is the Assistant Editor and Podcast Manager at *AudioFile* and is based in Portland, Maine. When she's not chasing her two young daughters around Maine's coastlines, she's writing essays about breaking half-Asian stereotypes and the pop-culture failings of the '90s. Coco is a writer with Wirecutter of *The New York Times* and is the author of the chapbook, *The Rabbit*.

Aurelia C. Scott
Aurelia C. Scott ("The Many Faces of Sherlock Holmes," page 40) loves being an *AudioFile* contributing editor because she is able to hear a wanton number of audiobooks and interview occasionally wanton authors and narrators. Herself the author of an award-winning nonfiction book about competitive rose gardeners, Aurelia is also working on a memoir of women and lingerie, and what might be a historical mystery set in a boarding house.

Coco McCracken photo by Christine Tanner, Jamie Hogan photo by Spencer Robinson

Reviewers


A.D.M.

A.L.S.M.

A.M.

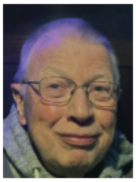
E.E.S.

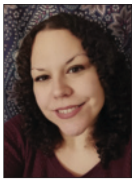
E.J.F.

J.J.M.

A.A.H.	Ash Holland, *Bookshop Owner*, ME
A.B.	Anna Broome, *Audiophile*, ME
A.C.S.	Aurelia C. Scott, *Writer*, ME
A.D.M.	Alan Minskoff, *Educator*, ID
A.K.R.	Alex Richey, *Librarian*, ME
A.L.C.	Amanda Costello, *Writer*, NE
A.L.S.M.	Amanda Murphy, *Librarian*, OH
A.M.	Ana G. Menchaca, *Librarian*, TX
B.A.G.	Elizabeth Gabriel, *Librarian*, WI
D.Z.	Denise Zajkowski, *Librarian*, IL
E.E.C.	Emily Connelly, *Librarian*, ME
E.E.S.	Elaine Sumner, *Librarian*, RI
E.J.F.	Elizabeth Fraser, *Calgary Public Library*, AB
E.Q.	Ellen Quint, *Writer*, NY
G.M.	Gina Monti, *Librarian*, CT
J.E.M.	Joyce E. McCarty, *Audiophile*, VA
J.E.S.	Joanne Simoneau, AudioFile, ME
J.J.M.	Jodi Martin, *Teacher*, NC

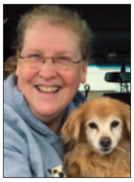
C.J.C.


D.A.W.


D.Z.

J.M.M.

K.M.P.


L.M.G.

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C.A.	Caitlin Augusta, *Librarian*, CT
C.A.P.	Crystal Patenaude, *Audiophile*, CT
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C.R.	Courtney Rodgers, *Writer*, TX
D.A.W.	David A. Walton, *Writer*, PA
D.B.	Dan Bortolotti, *Writer*, ON
D.E.M.	Dale E. McGarrigle, *Writer*, ME
D.J.S.	Daniel J. Siegel, *Audiophile*, PA
D.L.G.	Diana Granger, *Librarian*, WI
J.M.D.	Jennifer M. Dowell, AudioFile, ME
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L.B.F.	Leslie B. Fine, *Educator*, NY
L.J.C.A.	Lisa Abrazo, *Librarian*, MN
L.M.G.	Lisa Grimaldi, *Dyer Library*, ME
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L.T.	Lisa Taylor, *Librarian*, FL
L.W.S.	Lorraine W. Shanley, *Audiophile*, NY

Continued on page 71

Want to be part of *AudioFile*'s review team?

While we work with more than 100 reviewers, we are always interested in new reviewers. We value fresh opinions across all genres. If you are a very active listener, have writing experience, and are interested in discussing the audiobook performance in 125 words or less—you are welcome to apply to editor Robin Whitten, **robin@audiofilemagazine.com**.

Reviewer Spotlight

Laura Sackton (L.S.)

I am a queer book nerd and avid baker based in rural Massachusetts. I came to audiobooks late in my reading life, but now I can't imagine living without them. I listen to books in every genre but have a particular passion for queer lit, contemporary essay collections, and memoirs read by the author.

Lisa Taylor (L.T.)

I'm an academic librarian in Florida, with public library experience, too. I also write short stories, poems, and essays. I love reviewing for *AudioFile* (I've been doing it for more than a decade!). I am as happy listening to a full-cast version of a Shakespeare play as I am listening to a dreamy short story by Isabel Allende or a children's nonfiction picture book. Reading outside your comfort zone makes you wiser and more empathetic—at least it does in my book. Comuting, dog-walking, and crocheting are my favorite opportunities for listening to audiobooks.

Editors' Picks

JAMES LEE BURKE
Don't Forget Me, Little Bessie
Read by Amanda Stribling

An epic new entry in Burke's Holland Family series, starring fourteen-year-old Bessie Holland.

Simon & Schuster Audio   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668142561 $27.29 (also CD)
Release Date: June 3

MOLLY JONG-FAST
How to Lose Your Mother: A Daughter's Memoir
Read by Molly Jong-Fast

Jong-Fast reads her memoir about her mother, writer Erica Jong.

Penguin Audio   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217071999 $20.00
Release Date: June 3

JASON REYNOLDS
Soundtrack
Read by Nile Bullock, Mekhi Hewling, Jade Williams, and a Full Cast

This audio original from the always original Jason Reynolds features a full cast and a score.

Listening Library   Unabridged   Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593863466 $18.00
Release date: June 3

MALKA OLDER
The Potency of Ungovernable Impulses
Read by Lindsey Dorcus

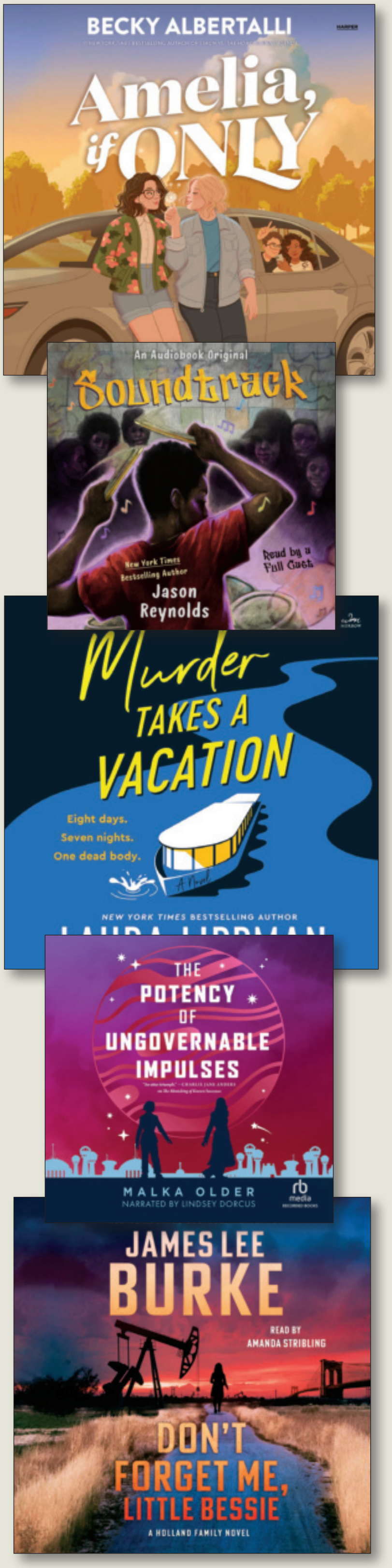
Investigators Mossa and Pleiti are back in the third installment of this cozy sci-fi mystery series set on the gas giant Jupiter.

Recorded Books   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798896799436 $20.99
Release date: June 10

PETER SWANSON
Kill Your Darlings
Read by Steven Weber

Steven Weber narrates this story of a marriage, told in reverse.

Harper Audio   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063433656 $27.99
Release date: June 10


BECKY ALBERTALLI
Amelia, if ONLY
An Audiobook Original
Soundtrack
Read by a Full Cast
New York Times Bestselling Author
Jason Reynolds
Murder TAKES A VACATION
Eight days. Seven nights. One dead body.
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
THE POTENCY OF UNGOVERNABLE IMPULSES
MALKA OLDER
NARRATED BY LINDSEY DORCUS
JAMES LEE BURKE
READ BY AMANDA STRIBLING
DON'T FORGET ME, LITTLE BESSIE
A HOLLAND FAMILY NOVEL

S.A. COSBY
King of Ashes
Read by Adam Lazarre-White

A Southern crime epic from the author of *All the Sinners Bleed*.

Macmillan Audio   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250395030 $26.99
Release Date: June 10

BECKY ALBERTALLI
Amelia, If Only
Read by Caitlin Kinnunen

The newest love story from teen lit powerhouse Becky Albertalli.

Harper Audio   Unabridged   Ages 14+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063045958 $27.99
Release Date: June 10

LAURA LIPPMAN
Murder Takes a Vacation
Read by Kimberly Farr

A new sleuth is on the case! Muriel Blossom finds herself embroiled in a murder mystery on a Parisian river cruise. Golden Voice Kimberly Farr narrates.

Harper Audio   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780062998132 $27.99
Release Date: June 17

RACHEL HARTMAN
Among Ghosts
Read by Will Watt

Set in the world of *Tess of the Road*, a story of a boy hiding in a haunted abbey.

Listening Library   Unabridged   Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217069316 $27.50
Release date: June 24

HONORÉE FANONNE JEFFERS
Misbehaving at the Crossroads: Essays & Writings
Read by Karen Chilton

A collection of essays about Black women's lives, from the author of *The Love Songs of W.E.B. DuBois*.

Harper Audio   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063246669 $27.99
Release date: June 24

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MIYE LEE, SANDY JOOSUN LEE [TRANS.]
The Dallergut Dream-Making District
Read by Shannon Tyo

In this sequel to *The Dallergut Dream Department Store*, Penny, now an employee, discovers dark secrets in the dream industry.

Harlequin Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781488234903 $23.09
Release Date: June 24

MARTIN WALKER
An Enemy in the Village: Bruno, Chief of Police, Book 18
Reader TBA

The death of a real estate agent kicks off the intrigue in the latest in Walker's series set in the French countryside.

Recorded Books Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798896797999 $26.24
Release Date: July 1

HARINI NAGENDRA
Into the Leopard's Den
Read by Simone Lewis

We've loved this mystery series set in 1920s India, starring investigator Kaveri Murthy. A new narrator steps in for this installment.

Tantor Media Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798331950286 $26.24
Release date: July 1

ADRIANA TRIGIANI
The View from Lake Como
Read by Mira Sorvino

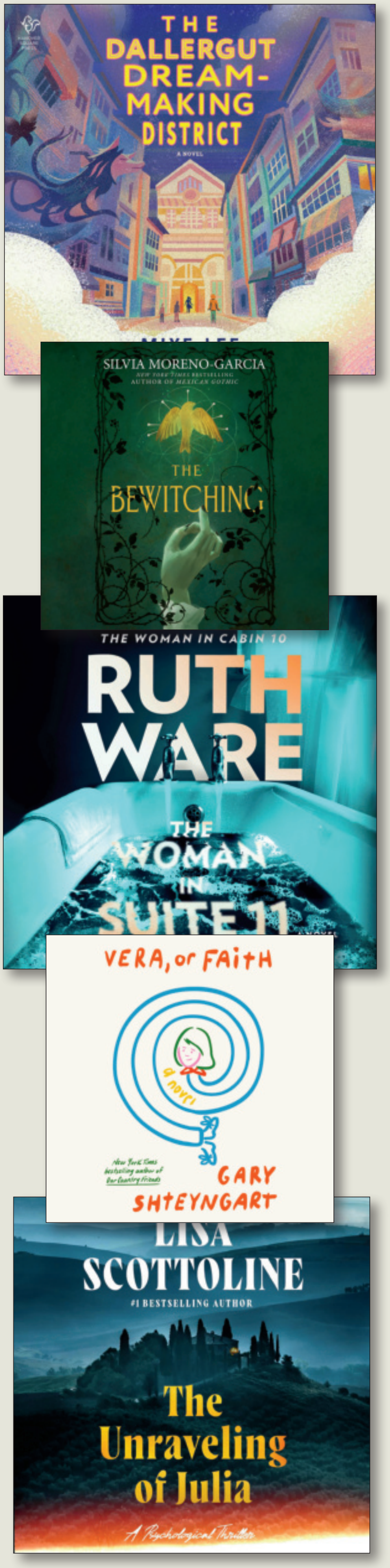
A dutiful daughter travels from Lake Como, New Jersey, to Lake Como in Italy in search of a meaningful life for herself.

Penguin Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593870211 $25.00
Release Date: July 8

RUTH WARE
The Woman in Suite 11
Read by Imogen Church

Imogen Church returns to narrate this follow up to *The Woman in Cabin 10*.

Simon & Schuster Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668131527 $22.49 (also CD)
Release Date: July 8



GARY SHTEYNGART
Vera, or Faith
Read by Shannon Tyo

The youngest member of a troubled family is desperate to meet her birth mother.

Random House Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593912676 $22.50
Release Date: July 8

DANIEL SILVA
An Inside Job
Read by Edoardo Ballerini

Golden Voice Edoardo Ballerini returns to narrate the newest Silva international thriller.

Harper Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063384293 $27.99
Release date: July 15

LISA SCOTTOLINE
The Unraveling of Julia
Read by Maria Marquis

A gothic thriller set on a Tuscan vineyard.

Hachette Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668648278 $31.99
Release Date: July 15

SILVIA MORENO-GARCIA
The Bewitching
Read by Gisela Chípe

A grad student in 1990s Massachusetts uncovers witch stories that link back to her grandmother's experiences in 1900s Mexico.

Random House Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217075973 $22.50
Release Date: July 15

MIA TSAI
The Memory Hunters
Read by Channie Waites

From the author of *Bitter Medicine*, a fantasy in which a researcher for the Museum of Human Memory and her bodyguard uncover dangerous truths.

Recorded Books Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798895947555 $26.24
Release date: July 29

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Kick Back with Audiobooks: Selections

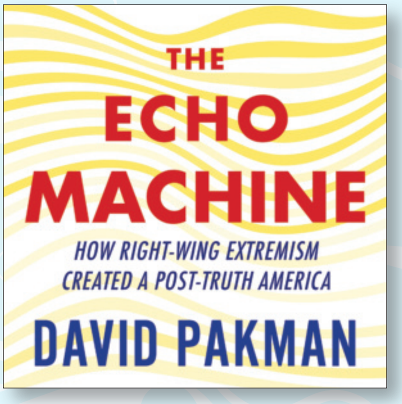
Welcome to a showcase of new audiobooks from the independent publishing community.

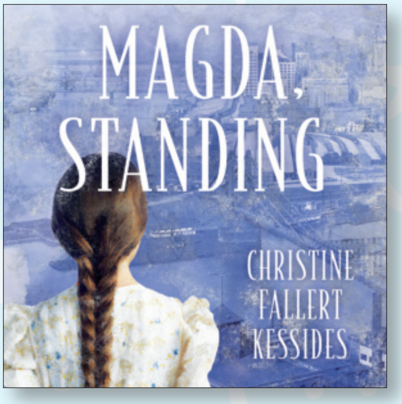
Enjoy this special expanded title showcase and explore the growing world of audiobooks with these latest releases shared by independent publishers, producers, and self-published authors.

"For anyone who wants to stand up to disinformation and deepen their understanding of politics without getting lost in jargon."
—Brian Tyler Cohen, YouTuber and best-selling author of *Shameless*

How right-wing extremism led to the fall of critical thinking and rise of reactionary politics—and how we can save our democracy.

The Echo Machine: How Right-Wing Extremism Created a Post-Truth America
By David Pakman, read by David Pakman
Published by BEACON PRESS
Available Now / DD


THE
ECHO
MACHINE
HOW RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM
CREATED A POST-TRUTH AMERICA
DAVID PAKMAN


MAGDA,
STANDING
CHRISTINE
FALLERT
KESSIDES

A teenager in 1916-19 Pittsburgh surmounts crises in her German immigrant family during WWI and the Spanish flu.

Gold medal from Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA) for Young Adult audiobook.

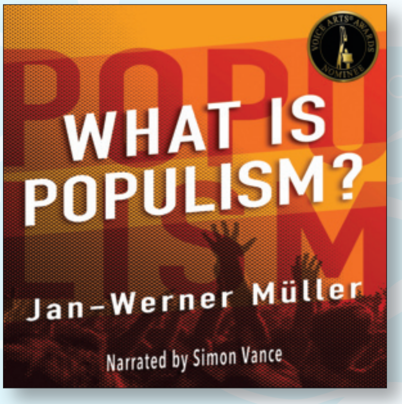
"...great world building and character development."—*LibraryThing*

"...gut-wrenching, beguiling historical novel...."—*TheBookCommentary*

Magda, Standing
By Christine Fallert Kessides, read by Heidi Housh
Published by BOLD STORY PRESS, audiobook produced by ELLIS AUDIOBOOKS
Available Now / DD / For free promo codes, email: ckessides@gmail.com

Trump's 2nd term in office is already chaotic and painful for many worldwide, making Müller's message more timely than ever. Müller recently wrote: "'Trump's victory is far-right populism, not pro-workers populism." The crucial element of populism is the populists' claim that they and only they represent what they usually call "the real people." How do we respond to this? Listen!

What Is Populism?
By Jan-Werner Müller, read by Simon Vance
Published by POST HYPNOTIC PRESS INC.
Available Now / DD

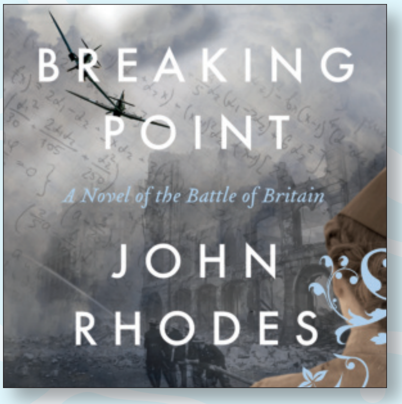

VOICE ARTS AWARDS NOMINEE
WHAT IS
POPULISM?
Jan-Werner Müller
Narrated by Simon Vance

from Independent Publishers & Authors

Heroes aren't just the ones who bring home medals. *Hero Redefined* delves into lesser-known stories of Olympic athletes—and Olympic venues—that challenge the conventional narrative of glory and gold. In riveting personal profiles exploring herculean feats of strength, perseverance, and sportsmanship, award-winning sports journalist Levy offers a new vision of heroism.

Hero Redefined: Profiles of Olympic Athletes Under the Radar
By Doug Levy, read by Mike Zuzel
Published by CLEVER CLEEVER PUBLISHING
Available Now / DD

DOUG LEVY
HERO
REDEFINED
PROFILES OF OLYMPIC ATHLETES UNDER THE RADAR


BREAKING POINT
A Novel of the Battle of Britain
JOHN RHODES

1940, World War II. The Nazis have crushed Europe, and Hitler launches a massive aerial assault with the Luftwaffe against the heavily outnumbered British RAF. The fate of civilization teeters in the balance.

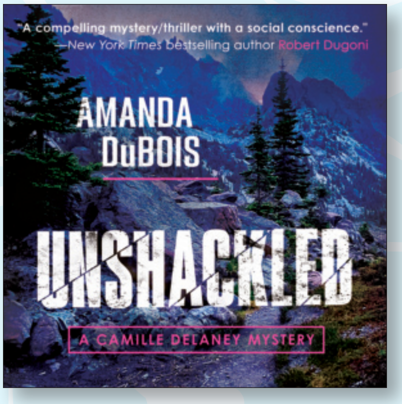
Breaking Point: A Novel of the Battle of Britain
By John Rhodes, read by Evie Butcher
Published by ROUNDEL HOUSE
Available Now / DD

Blackbird is a memoir composed in real time, an honest look at the emotional, physical, and spiritual impact of deep despair. Betsy's story inspires important conversations about mental health, grief, and creating a path toward healing.

"A very specific, enlightening, and ultimately uplifting story of recovery and understanding."—Midwest Book Review

Blackbird: A Mother's Reflections on Grief, Loss, and Life After Suicide
By Betsy Thibaut Stephenson, read by Julia Hamra
Published by GFB
Available Now / DD / $14.99

Blackbird
A Mother's Reflections on Grief, Loss, and Life After Suicide
BETSY THIBAUT STEPHENSON

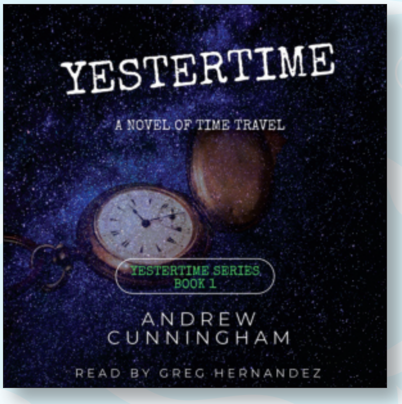

"A compelling mystery/thriller with a social conscience."
—New York Times bestselling author Robert Dugoni
AMANDA DuBOIS
UNSHACKLED
A CAMILLE DELANEY MYSTERY

Award-winning author DuBois returns with a new installment in the Camille Delaney Mystery series, this time taking on injustice in the prison system. A twisty tale of deceit, mistaken identity, and finding family in unexpected places.

"A compelling mystery/thriller with a social conscience."
—*New York Times* bestselling author Robert Dugoni

Unshackled: A Camille Delaney Mystery
By Amanda DuBois, read by Liz Fodor
Published by FLASHPOINT
Available Now / DD / $21.99

Kick Back with Audiobooks: Selections


YESTERTIME
A NOVEL OF TIME TRAVEL
YESTERTIME SERIES BOOK 1
ANDREW CUNNINGHAM
READ BY GREG HERNANDEZ

"I'm going to die a hundred years before I was born...."

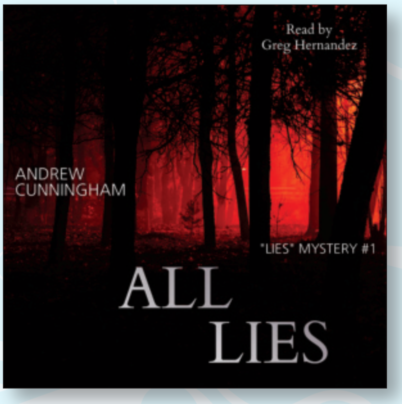
The handwritten note was in a dusty trunk that sat in a cave untouched for 150 years. When journalist Ray Burton finds the trunk near the Arizona ghost town of Hollow Rock, his life changes in an instant.

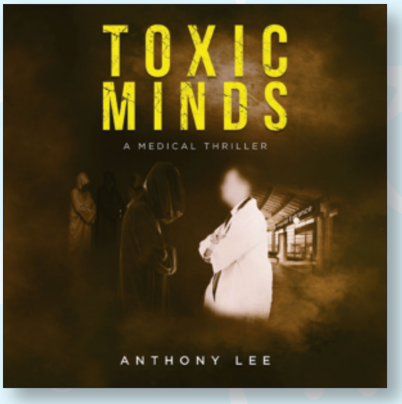
Yestertime: A Novel of Time Travel
By Andrew Cunningham, read by Greg Hernandez
Published by ARCNOVELS
Available Now / DD

"I come from a long line of idiots."

Those were the last words his father uttered to Del Honeycutt before dying. A seemingly innocent date gone tragically wrong plunges Del into a web of murder, lies, greed, and a hidden fortune dating back to a crime committed 85 years earlier by his great-grandfather.

All Lies ("Lies" Mystery Thriller Series Book 1)
By Andrew Cunningham, read by Greg Hernandez
Published by ARCNOVELS
Available Now / DD


Read by Greg Hernandez
ANDREW CUNNINGHAM
"LIES" MYSTERY #1
ALL LIES

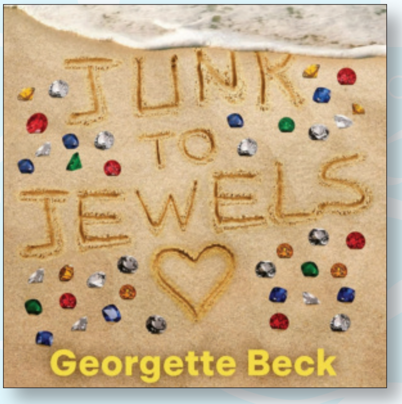

TOXIC MINDS
A MEDICAL THRILLER
ANTHONY LEE

In this medical thriller, healthcare collides with disinformation. A patient dies in a suicide bomber attack. Her doctor suspects the work of a malicious cult. The only way to avenge his patient is to join the cult and destroy it from within.

Toxic Minds
By Anthony Lee, read by Anthony Lee
Published by ANTHONY LEE
Available Now / DD

"I want a divorce." These words shattered Georgette Beck's world. As a single mom, she battled hopelessness—until God's love restored her. Junk to Jewels is a powerful testimony of faith, resilience, and healing. Let Georgette's story remind you: You are never junk, but a precious jewel.

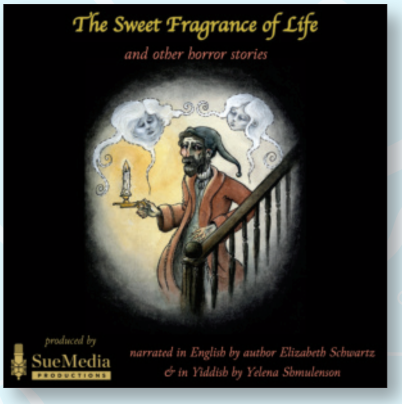
Junk to Jewels: A Journey From Brokenness & Despair to Beauty & Delight
By Georgette Beck, read by Georgette Beck
Published by FEDD BOOKS
Available Now / MP3

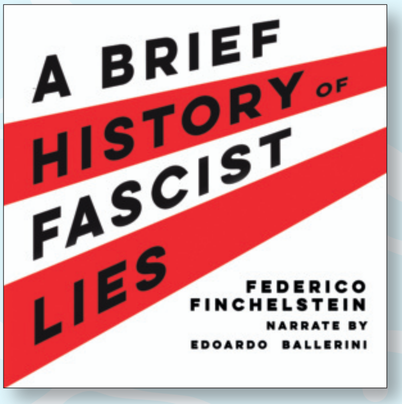

JUNK TO JEWELS
Georgette Beck

from Independent Publishers & Authors

"...Mesmerizing stories that wraps up way too soon," (*Kirkus*) by renowned Jewish vocalist/writer Elizabeth Schwartz. In English & Yiddish; a Rabbi commits the gravest sin, evil lurks in a pre-war Germany apartment building, a young girl experiences hell at sea, in tales that explore European Jewish history and culture through a feminist perspective, while offering reflections on racism and misogyny.

The Sweet Fragrance of Life & Other Horror Stories
By Elizabeth Schwartz, read by Elizabeth Schwartz (English)
Yelena Shmulenson (Yiddish)
Published by SUEMEDIA PRODUCTIONS/BLACKSTONE
Available Now / DD, MP3-CD


The Sweet Fragrance of Life
and other horror stories
produced by
SueMedia
PRODUCTIONS
narrated in English by author Elizabeth Schwartz
& in Yiddish by Yelena Shmulenson


A BRIEF
HISTORY OF
FASCIST
LIES
FEDERICO
FINCHELSTEIN
NARRATE BY
EDOARDO BALLERINI

World-renowned historian Federico Finchelstein explains why fascists regarded simple and often hateful lies as truth and why so many of their followers believed the falsehoods. From Hitler to Mussolini, fascist leaders capitalized on lies as the base of their power and popular sovereignty. "Post-truth" has a long political and intellectual lineage we cannot ignore. Finchelstein's message is urgent and timely

A Brief History of Fascist Lies
By Federico Finchelstein, read by Edoardo Ballerini
Published by POST HYPNOTIC PRESS INC.
Available Now / DD

From American Book Award-winning author Rilla Askew comes the epic, true tale of Lincolnshire martyr Anne Askew. In Henry VIII's England, where religion and politics are ruthlessly entangled, a young woman of Anne's fierce independence, Reformist faith, and connections to Queen Katheryn Parr's court cannot escape official notice, or danger.

Prize for the Fire
By Rilla Askew, read by Ruth Redman
Published by RACONTEURS AUDIO LLP
Available Now / DD

RILLA ASKEW
PRIZE
for the
FIRE
A NOVEL
Read by RUTH REDMAN

BURN THE
S.M. MCVICAR
FREEZE

After a billionaire orchestrated Freeze Act pushes the United States into authoritarianism, one rebel tries to change the system by using a revolutionary technology that allows him to tap into the power of the universe. And now, those billionaires want him dead.

The Matrix meets the current state of America.

Burn the Freeze
By S.M. McVicar, read by S.M. McVicar
Published by HOPEFUL REBEL PUBLISHING
Available Now / MP3

Kick Back with Audiobooks: Selections

ONE WOMAN'S IMPOSSIBLE QUEST LEADS HER TO THE END OF THE VIKING AGE
FLIGHT of the WREN
Written and Narrated by
WINTER FOX

A *Booklife* Editor's Choice!

At the turn of the first millennium, a young Shaman's apprentice embarks on an impossible quest which will bring her to the end of the Viking Age. Weaving history, magic, battles, and adventure, *Flight of the Wren* has everything you need to escape into the past. The first in a series of five books.

Flight of the Wren
By Winter Fox, read by Winter Fox
Published by WINTER FOX BOOKS
Available Now / DD

Ravi Agrawal, former chief CNN India correspondent, explores the transformative impact of smartphones and internet in India. The shift to smartphones has revolutionized daily life, disrupting traditions, transforming business, and shifting the economy from cash to credit. The internet empowers, but also brings challenges: pornography, government control, and a rise in violence and terrorism.

India Connected: How the Smartphone is Transforming the World's Largest Democracy
By Ravi Agrawal, read by TBA
Published by POST HYPNOTIC PRESS INC.
Available in July 2025 / DD

RAVI AGRAWAL
"Quite simply, the best book about India today." FAREED ZAKARIA
INDIA CONNECTED
How the Smartphone Is Transforming the World's Largest Democracy

DIAMONDS IN AUSCHWITZ
a novel
MEG HAMAND

Diamonds in Auschwitz is a poignant tale of love, resilience, and hope amid unimaginable darkness. Rachael discovers a hidden diamond ring in Auschwitz, sparking a bond with young Chaya. Interwoven is the story of Samual and Hanna in Nazi-occupied Prague—lovers whose dreams endure even as their world crumbles.

Diamonds in Auschwitz
By Meg Hamand, read by Emily Sutton-Smith
Published by RIVER GROVE BOOKS
Available June 24, 2025 / MP3 / $20.95

A divorce before the marriage? That's how it felt to the younger, attractive Sydney Wyles who falls hard for the older uber rich Palm Beacher, Victor Paxton, when a prenup agreement causes friction before and after the marriage. This "War of the Roses" style dark comedy keeps you in suspense, wondering the outcome played out at their Lake Como villa, a crucial part of the contract.

A fun Summer listen!

The Lake Contract
By Carla J. Harrod, read by Jennifer Riker
Published by PUNCH AUDIO
Available Now / DD

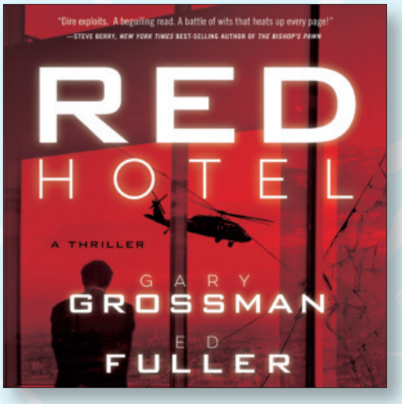
The Lake Contract
a novel
by Carla J. Harrod
read by Jennifer Riker

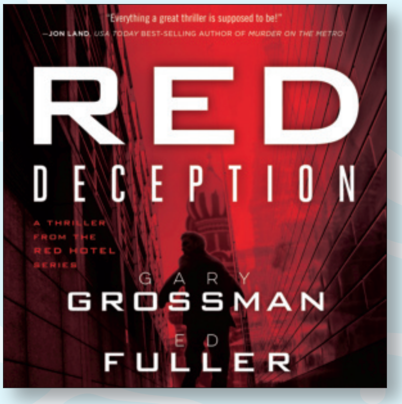
BE READY TO BE CATAPULTED INTO THE REAL WORLD OF GLOBAL INTRIGUE!

from Independent Publishers & Authors

After a deadly bombing at Tokyo's Kensington Royal Hotel, ex-Army intelligence officer turned hotel executive, Dan Reilly, pursues the assassin and uncovers a global conspiracy orchestrated by a superpower. Reilly races against time to unravel the plot against NATO's security, while questioning whether the mysterious and alluring Marnie Babbitt, can be trusted.

Red Hotel: The Red Hotel Series, Book 1
By Gary Grossman & Ed Fuller, read by P.J. Ochlan
Published by THE RED HOTEL LLC
Available at Audible / MP3-CD


"Dire exploits. A beguiling read. A battle of wits that heats up every page!"
—STEVE BERRY, NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR OF THE BISHOP'S PAWN
RED
HOTEL
A THRILLER
GARY
GROSSMAN
ED
FULLER

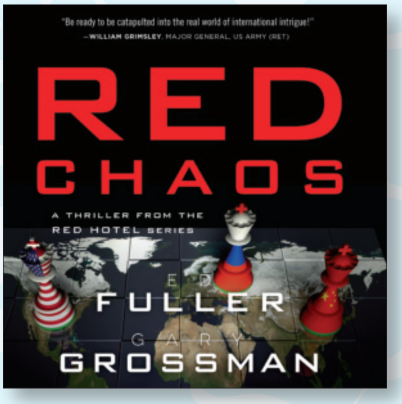

"Everything a great thriller is supposed to be!"
—JON LAND, USA TODAY BEST-SELLING AUTHOR OF MURDER ON THE METRO
RED
DECEPTION
A THRILLER FROM THE RED HOTEL SERIES
GARY
GROSSMAN
ED
FULLER

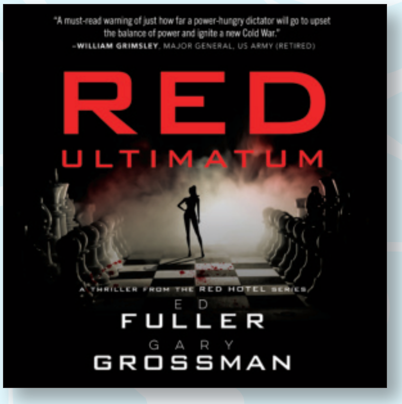
When terrorists target U.S. infrastructure using a leaked State Department report, former Army intelligence officer Dan Reilly uncovers a global, Russian-led conspiracy full of traps and traitors. Can Reilly connect the dots to a hugely explosive geopolitical plot and even save the woman who may be part of it?

Red Deception: The Red Hotel Series, Book 2
By Gary Grossman & Ed Fuller, read by P.J. Ochlan
Published by THE RED HOTEL LLC
Available at Audible

Dan Reilly is back in action in a heart-pounding thriller—the stakes can't be higher. As the Arctic ice melts, Russian President Nicolai Gorshkov seeks to control international oil routes to fund a greater Russian Empire. The clock ticks toward disaster on land and under the sea with Reilly at his best.

Red Chaos: The Red Hotel Series, Book 3
By Ed Fuller & Gary Grossman, read by P.J. Ochlan
Published by THE RED HOTEL LLC
Available at Audible


"Be ready to be catapulted into the real world of international intrigue!"
—WILLIAM GRIMSLEY, MAJOR GENERAL, US ARMY (RET.)
RED
CHAOS
A THRILLER FROM THE RED HOTEL SERIES
ED
FULLER
GARY
GROSSMAN


"A must-read warning of just how far a power-hungry dictator will go to upset the balance of power and ignite a new Cold War."
—WILLIAM GRIMSLEY, MAJOR GENERAL, US ARMY (RETIRED)
RED
ULTIMATUM
A THRILLER FROM THE RED HOTEL SERIES
ED
FULLER
GARY
GROSSMAN

A former U.S. president's plane crashes, Cairo is attacked, and the Secretary of State is kidnapped. As Russia's President Gorshkov pushes toward Soviet revival, China resists, and Dan Reilly races to unravel a global web of chaos, facing assassins, sleeper spies, and a daring rescue in the Colombian jungle.

Red Ultimatum: The Red Hotel Series, Book 4
By Ed Fuller & Gary Grossman, read by P.J. Ochlan
Published by THE RED HOTEL LLC
Available at Audible

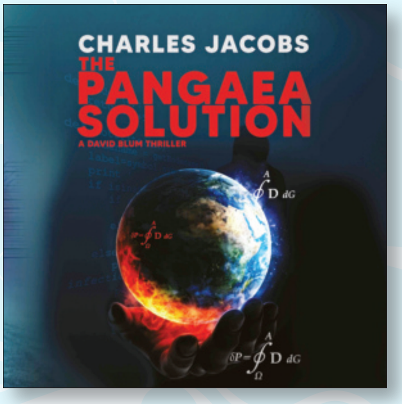
Kick Back with Audiobooks: Selections

TAXI SHOP
By Ghenet Harvey
Narrated by Simone Moore & John-Andrew Morrison
Yu-airit

Every parent knows that children often get bored with their old toys...until someone else wants them. Listen as Nora and her father go through this very familiar childhood drama as they travel through space in a taxi selling used goods.

Written in beautiful melodic Jamaican Patois.

Taxi Shop
By Ghenet Harvey, read by Simone Moore and John-Andrew Morrison
Published by YU-AIRIT AUDIO WORKS
Available now at major retailers / DD


CHARLES JACOBS
THE PANGAEA SOLUTION
A DAVID BLUM THRILLER

Former FBI agent Blum uncovers a plot by a shadowy think-tank to spread a deadly virus across the globe. A final conflict in the bowels of an experimental greenhouse reveals the plot is ultimately more profound than Blum could have imagined, forcing him to question his own sense of morality.

The Pangaea Solution
By Charles Jacobs, read by Dion Graham
Published by CHARLES JACOBS
Available Now / DD

THE COMPLETE
Tails of the Travelling Bag
Written by: Griselda Hill
Narrated by William Merryn Hill

This enchanting audiobook brings together all three volumes of the *Tails of the Travelling Bag*. Jerri gerbil and his companions have their own adventures as they join their friend, Jesus, in his travels and ministry. Meticulously researched and warmly told, this is a book to delight children and adults alike.

The Complete Tails of the Travelling Bag
By Griselda Hill, read by William Merryn Hill
Published by SPOKEN REALMS LLC
Available Now / DD

CROSSROADS OF AWAKENING MEMORY
M.D. HOUSE
Narrated by Stephen Dalton

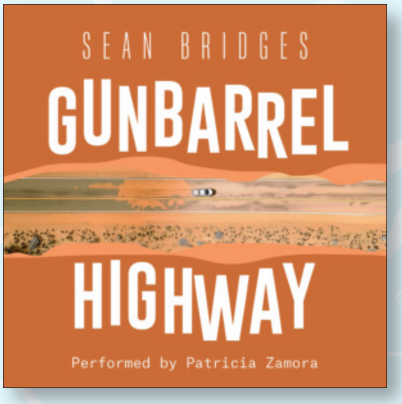
Amid a besom of chaos and doubt, young Council Guard Rain Barynd must work with members of a mysterious ancient order to piece together a growing convergence of clues long prophesied. All while trying to figure out his place in the mythical, magical madness. Only one thing is certain—he is not ready.

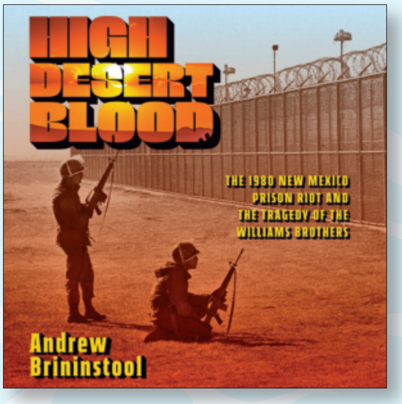
Crossroads of Awakening Memory
By M.D. House, read by Stephen Dalton
Published by M.D. HOUSE
Available Now / DD

from Independent Publishers & Authors

A hit and run becomes hell on earth for Daniel Morrison when a million-dollar bounty is placed on his head. And now his friends; family, along with the entire state of Texas are out to collect the jackpot.

Gunbarrel Highway
By Sean Bridges, read by Patricia Zamora
Published by AUDIBLE PARADE PRODUCTIONS
Available Now / DD


SEAN BRIDGES
GUNBARREL
HIGHWAY
Performed by Patricia Zamora

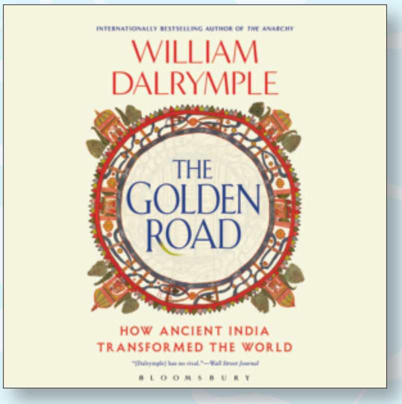

HIGH DESERT BLOOD
THE 1980 NEW MEXICO PRISON RIOT AND THE TRAGEDY OF THE WILLIAMS BROTHERS
Andrew Brininstool

An overconfident father's simple insurance fraud scheme unknowingly thrusts his family into the chaos of one of America's most violent prison riots. Andrew Brininstool's meticulously researched and compelling storytelling take listeners inside the Penitentiary of New Mexico, unveiling the conditions that led to the infamous and catastrophic 1980 riot which left a permanent scar on the American penal landscape.

High Desert Blood: The 1980 New Mexico Prison Riot and the Tragedy of the Williams Brothers
By Andrew Brininstool, read by Michael Puttonen
Published by POST HYPNOTIC PRESS INC.
Available July 2025 / DD

The internationally bestselling author of *The Anarchy* returns with a sparkling, soaring history of ideas, tracing South Asia's under-recognized role in producing the world as we know it.

The Golden Road
By William Dalrymple, read by William Dalrymple
Published by BLOOMSBURY PUBLISHING
Available Now / DD / $27.00


INTERNATIONALLY BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE ANARCHY
WILLIAM DALRYMPLE
THE GOLDEN ROAD
HOW ANCIENT INDIA TRANSFORMED THE WORLD
BLOOMSBURY

AFFAIRS OF STATE
C.A. JAMES
DO BIGGER THINGS
THE PRICE OF REVENGE
WHISTLE-STOP POLITICS
EDWARD SEGAL
Never Trust a Demon
THE PATH OF MOST RESISTANCE
Operation Ark
Pen Farthing
NOTHING IS BEAUTIFUL

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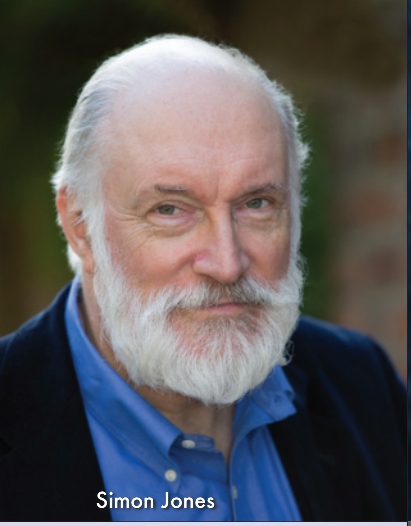
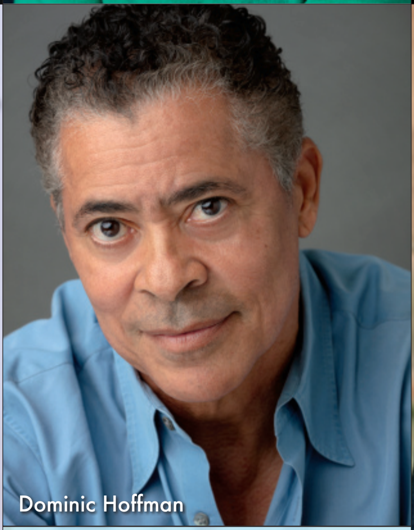

Simon Jones

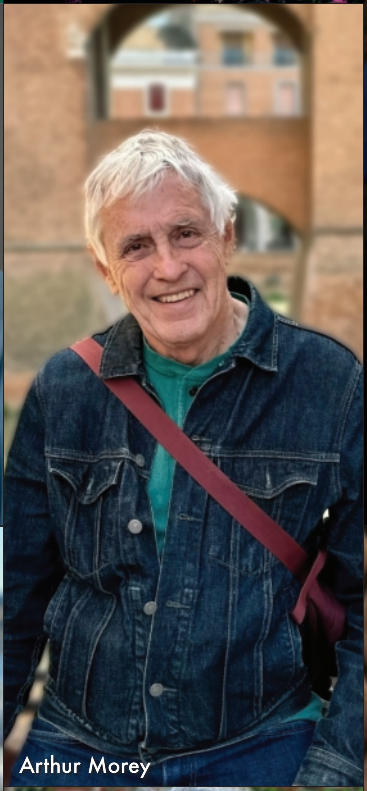
Kate Reading

Julia Whelan

JD Jackson

Simon Vance


Dominic Hoffman


Arthur Morey

Robert Petkoff

Suzanne Toren

Cassandra Campbell

Martin Jarvis

Ramón de Ocampo

Grover Gardner

GOLDEN VOICES

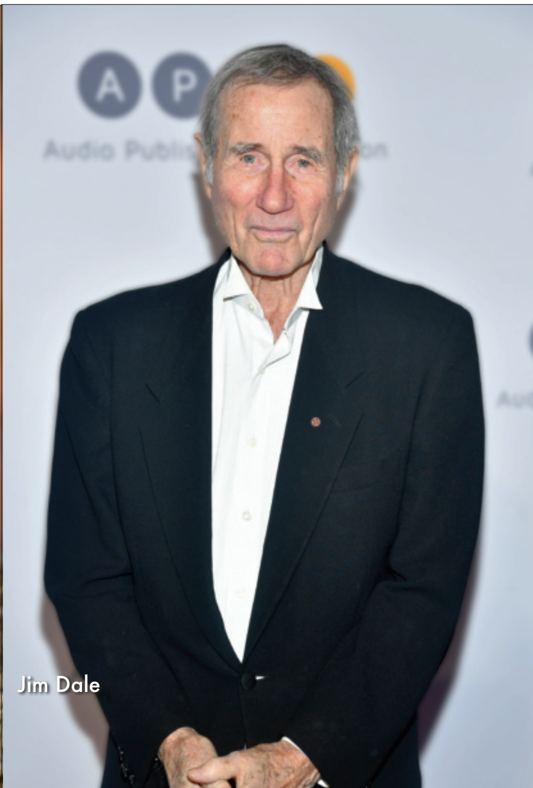
Celebrating Exceptional Narrators

AudioFile is delighted to recognize the careers and outstanding audiobook performances of our Golden Voice narrators. Listen to *AudioFile*'s "Behind the Mic" podcast to hear extended interviews and highlights, and find more about all of these exceptional narrators at **audiofilemagazine.com/golden-voice**.

Photo credits on page 71

January LaVoy

Robin Miles



Jim Dale

Photo by Two Dudes Photo

HILLARY HUBER

How did you get started with narrating?
After 20 years of commercial VO, I saw the writing on the wall—not only would I eventually age out of the demographic but I wasn't creating "art," and it began to feel unsatisfying. I wasn't using my acting skills or creating anything beautiful. So I took a stab at audiobooks—I sent Blackstone a copy of *The Bell Jar* and a sample of me reading a bit of it. They replied that they would love to have me narrate that book but the audio rights weren't available, and would I be willing to narrate *A Very Easy Death* by Simone de Beauvoir instead? So that was my first book.

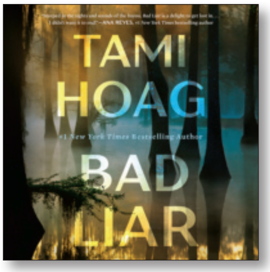
Tell us about a memorable character you've given voice to.
One of the most compelling, and not necessarily in a good way, was Dorothy Daniels in *A Certain Hunger* by Chelsea Summers. The blurb says it all: "Food critic Dorothy Daniels indulges in her homicidal urges by murdering her lovers and devouring their organs in this intense, visceral, and lushly told tale of food, sex, power, and the pursuit of a very particular taste set between New York and Italy." She was the *most* fun character to play—sarcastic and quick-witted and rapacious. *Loved* it.

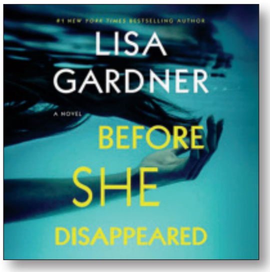
> *"I have made lifelong friends—all of us with the shared pursuit of excellent storytelling."*

What's the most interesting piece of research you've done for an audiobook?
I did a book about a black ops outfit in Afghanistan—this was pre-Forvo [an online pronunciation dictionary], and I used to call embassies when I needed to learn how to pronounce foreign words. So I was asking this guy how to pronounce words like *mujahideen* and *khak da saret* and *Allah akbar*, etc., and my phone battery died. When I recharged it and called back, my friend at the embassy breathed a sigh of relief—he was sure they had cut off our call because of the controversial nature of our conversation! Needless to say, I'm probably on some watch lists . . . .

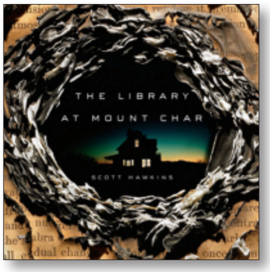
What has surprised you the most about your work in audiobooks?
The community that we have created! There does not exist in the performance world a more welcoming, supportive, and generous group of people. I have made lifelong friends—all of us with the shared pursuit of excellent storytelling. It's really very, very special. ■

ESSENTIAL LISTENING FOR HILLARY HUBER





My Brilliant Friend
Elena Ferrante



ALLISON BRENNAN
YOU'LL NEVER FIND ME

VIKAS ADAM

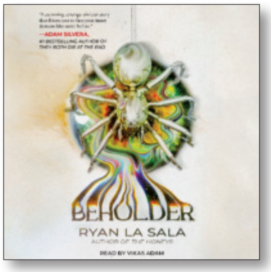
Photo by Sergio Garcia

Where do you find inspiration for accents or other aspects of your performance?
Short answer: All around me. Long answer: In undergrad, all my professors would hammer into us that "experience is one of the best teachers to be an actor." However, our yet-to-be-developed pre-frontal cortexes just couldn't comprehend that. So as I lived life, and experienced its ups, downs, diagonals, loop de loops—I started to understand what my wise teachers were trying so hard to knock into my head. So an even shorter answer—life. But another place I find inspiration is in the text itself. Studying character exploration and creation has been one of my ongoing loves of study as an actor. So I still pull from the many years as a working actor and how to craft as different of a character for the sonic experience. I develop acting exercises and activities I try on myself and my students to see if it can unlock some new discovery with a character. One of the best compliments I can receive is when someone shares that they initially thought there were multiple actors doing the book and were shocked that I was voicing everyone. I recently had a friend and colleague tell me they were annoyed while listening to a book I narrated and "the actress started speaking duet style" but then had to double-check that it was just me narrating. That kind of feedback lifts my spirits.

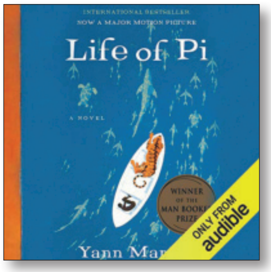
Tell us about a memorable character you've given voice to.
Oh boy, I don't know how I can answer this since there have been so many incredible characters, but immediately off the top of my head there's Sami Kierce in Harlan Coben's *Nobody's Fool*. He's so deliciously flawed, but his self-deprecating sense of humor and moral compass and relationship with his wife, Molly, connected me to him. But then there's Andy Mills from the incredible series starting with *Lavender House* by Lev AC Rosen, who's a gay ex-cop now turned detective in 1950s San Francisco. He's uber-masculine, a "man's man" and a product of his environment, and to explore his walls beginning to come down and find a sense of acceptance amongst the queer community he initially policed and terrorized.

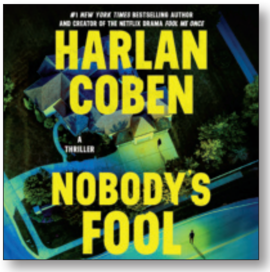
What has surprised you the most about your work in audiobooks?
What's really surprised me is how audiobooks have given me the opportunity to play characters I never would've gotten an opportunity to play otherwise. Especially with camera work it can be so specific and contingent on looks over what the talent is behind the actor, and so to be able to play all the characters—wowza. I had a challenging time being called in for South Asian characters on camera because I didn't fit whatever mold the industry perceived as "South Asian." I wasn't brown enough to be South Asian and I wasn't white enough to be other characters. So when audiobooks came along and I was able to actually authentically play South Asian and pronounce our names and words authentically (as opposed to my camera counterparts who looked the part but were providing anglicized colonial pronunciations), I finally felt—and I recognize the irony in my word choice here—seen. What's incredible about our industry is how there is an effort on presenting books as authentically as possible, and that means casting the right people who can bring that lived experience if required. Recording audiobooks has allowed me to live as the type of actor I envisioned—someone who's not relegated to one specific type of role, but to be able to play as many different characters and genres and writing styles as possible. ■

ESSENTIAL LISTENING FOR VIKAS ADAM



LEV AC ROSEN
a novel
LAVENDER HOUSE





A GREAT COUNTRY
SHILPI SOMAYA GOWDA

Photo by Robert Kazandjian

KIMBERLY FARR

How did you get started with narrating?
I've been a professional actress since I was 19 years old. And in 2004, I had two young-ish kids, and I didn't want to be doing theater (nights away from them) or films or TV (long hours on the set). But I didn't want to give up my acting career completely. A couple of colleagues who I worked with at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., had narrated audiobooks for Recorded Books during the months that the theater was dark, and I thought, well, that looks like fun!

From earliest childhood, I've always loved reading. I was the kid who checked the maximum number of books out of the library every two weeks, then brought them back and checked out the maximum number again. I think if I hadn't become an actress, I would have been a librarian.

So I had a friend, Jimmy Hite, one of the top audio engineers in Los Angeles, who volunteered to master a demo for me. I sent the demo off to Books on Tape, which at the time was the big audio publishing house in L.A. And I waited to be discovered.

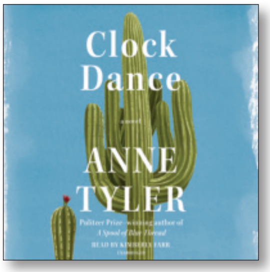
Which didn't happen. About 5 months went by and I heard nothing. I was just about to email them to make sure they'd gotten my recording when Dan Musselman called and asked me to come into their studio to audition in person. It must have gone pretty well, because within a couple of weeks I was assigned a book. I was going to get *paid to read*!

How do you approach narrating fiction and nonfiction differently?
To me, the biggest difference between fiction and nonfiction is the author's voice. By that I mean, a nonfiction work is expressed entirely in the voice the author chooses to tell a true story. Up until relatively recently, there was zero characterization in nonfiction, no disparate voices at all, even if the author was writing about people who could be considered characters. That is still true, more often than not.

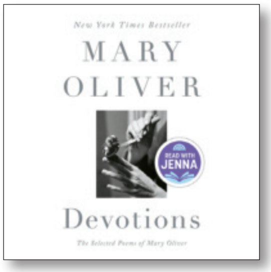
Fiction is the exact opposite. In a novel, my job is to give distinctive voices to all of the characters in the dialogue passages and read the narrative sections in the voice the author has chosen to weave their individual stories into the fabric of the book.

What is *not* different between fiction and nonfiction is that both tell stories, and a nonfiction story can, and ought to be, every bit as compelling as a fictional one. Both genres require the narrator to interpret the author's meaning, to express the author's intention as faithfully as possible, and to always be *in the service* of the writing. ■

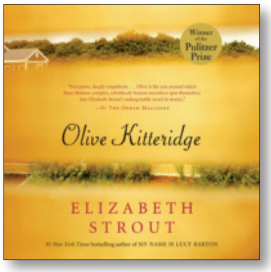
ESSENTIAL LISTENING FOR KIMBERLY FARR


Clock Dance
ANNE TYLER

Dearie
THE REMARKABLE LIFE OF JULIA CHILD
BOB SPITZ
READ BY KIMBERLY FARR • AN UNABRIDGED PRODUCTION


New York Times Bestseller
MARY OLIVER
READ WITH JENNA
Devotions
The Selected Poems of Mary Oliver

JOAN DIDION
LET ME TELL YOU WHAT I MEAN

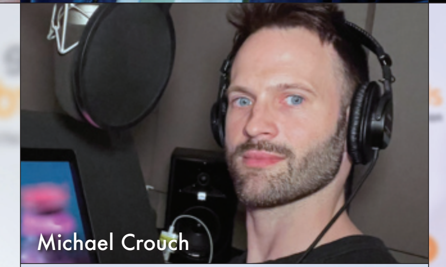

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize
Olive Kitteridge
ELIZABETH STROUT

George Guidall

Johnny Heller

Rupert Degas

Kevin R. Free


Michael Crouch

Bahni Turpin

Nicholas Boulton

Scott Brick

Emily Woo Zeller

Dion Graham

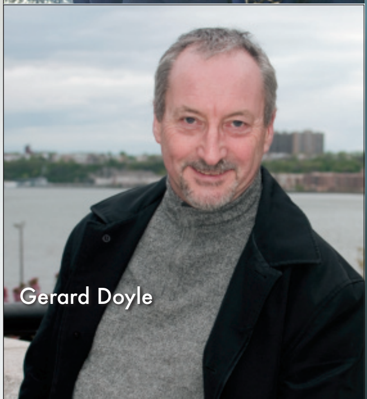
Stefan Rudnicki

Edoardo Ballerini

Barbara Rosenblat

Soneela Nankani

Photo credits on page 71

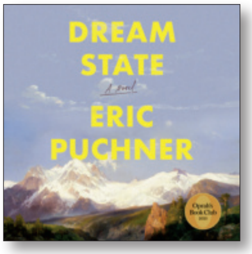

Gerard Doyle

Adjoa Andoh

DREAM STATE

Eric Puchner
Read by MacLeod Andrews

This audiobook begins with plans for a wedding and goes on to include . . . nearly everything else. MacLeod Andrews is an excellent narrator: gentle, funny, sharp, and intuitive. When Cece and Charlie's special day—officiated by Charlie's troubled friend, Garrett—moves in an unexpected direction, Andrews captures the characters' interactions without dramatic excess. Dialogue is among Andrews's strengths. The audiobook spans decades, and those time jumps are fairly seamless. The pacing and production are excellent, making the memorable performance easy to follow. Andrews maintains a warm and reliable voice that rewards the listener who spends time with these three people and their choices. *Dream State* will inspire melancholy, surprise, and laughter. *L.B.F.*



Random House Audio 13.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217018659 $26.00

BROKEN COUNTRY

Clare Leslie Hall
Read by Hattie Morahan

English actor Hattie Morahan narrates this novel of a secret past, grief mixed with guilt, and the dangerous consequences that result. Beth is a quiet farmer's wife who is living a peaceful existence, but her happiness comes at the cost of keeping silent about her past. When a chance encounter brings wealthy Gabriel Wolfe back into the picture, Beth has to determine whether to cling to the life she has or revisit the one she left behind. Morahan does an incredible job voicing Beth as a heartbroken schoolgirl and as an older woman reflecting on recent events with focused detachment. Morahan skillfully balances the crisp voices of posh English students and the soft tones of suspicious country farmers. *V.B.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 9 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668129487 $24.99 (also CD)

TWIST

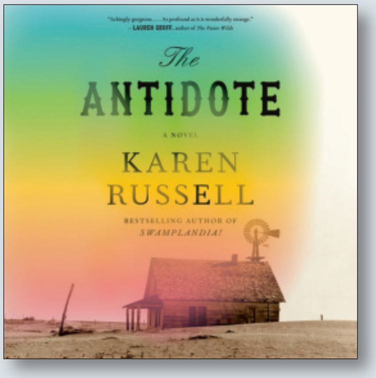
Colum McCann
Read by Colum McCann

Author/narrator Colum McCann's performance is masterful in this audiobook, which tests the delicate fabric of communication in our digital age. Irish journalist/playwright Anthony Fennell is saved from overwhelming ennui when he's assigned to a ship heading to South Africa to report on a crew that is repairing deepwater communication cables. The cables carry information urgently needed by the entire world. In Cape Town, Fennell meets mission chief John Conway and his actress girlfriend, Zanele. Once at sea, Conway discovers that a broken cable lies at the bottom of an unreachable underwater canyon. McCann never misses a beat in delivering the rising tension. In lyrical language filled with breathtaking images and perceptive observations, McCann's storytelling is painful, accurate, and poignant, while the novel's final twist is stunning. Outstanding listening. *S.J.H.*

Random House Audio 8 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217020638 $22.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217020645 $95.00

THE ANTIDOTE

Karen Russell
Read by Elena Rey, Sophie Amoss,
Mark Bramhall, Shayna Small,
Jon Orsini, Natasha Soudek,
Karen Russell, James Riding



Karen Russell, the magical realism and prose virtuoso, conjures the American Dust Bowl. Her vibrant imaginings are voiced by a stellar cast. Sophie Amoss shimmers as the Antidote, a "prairie witch" who takes verbal deposits; Asphodel Oletsky, a teen recently orphaned when her mom was murdered, is vividly portrayed by Elena Rey; and the masterful Mark Bramhall inhabits the sane, sensitive, long-suffering wheat farmer, Harp Oletsky. The audiobook's action occurs between two immense weather events six weeks apart in 1935—an epic dust storm dubbed "Black Sunday" bookended by a torrential rain and flood. The novel is set in fictional Uz, Nebraska; highlights include dramatic dust and wind descriptions, a talking scarecrow, and a camera that makes its own photos of the past, the present, and a possible future. *A.D.M.*

Random House Audio 17 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217018635 $25.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217018642 $76.00

> *Russell's vibrant imaginings are voiced by a stellar cast.*

RUN FOR THE HILLS

Kevin Wilson
Read by Marin Ireland

Marin Ireland's narration of this family dramedy maximizes the humor behind finding a half-sibling—only to find out there may be dozens more. Ireland's performance captures Madeline's mix of reluctance and curiosity as she joins her newfound half-brother, Reuben, on an unexpected road trip. Ireland's subtle vocal shifts distinguish each sibling, reflecting their varied backgrounds and personalities—and the range of secret lives their father enjoyed. Her delivery balances the story's deadpan humor and emotional depth, enhancing both comedic and reflective moments. The pacing keeps the story engaging, with Ireland conveying the uncertainty and hope that shape the siblings' journey. Though some tonal shifts sound abrupt, her interpretation deepens the story's themes of identity, family, and forgiveness, making the audiobook an immersive experience. *M.R.*

Harper Audio 7.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063317543 $24.99

SHOW DON'T TELL: Stories

Curtis Sittenfeld
Read by Michael Crouch,
Curtis Sittenfeld, George Newbern,
Kristen Sieh, Xe Sands,
Emily Rankin, Nicole Lewis

Fabulous narrator casting highlights layered human relationships in Curtis Sittenfeld's 12 short stories, which tackle human complexities. Emily Rankin's melodic lilt captures the youthful confusion of a college student in the titular story. Michael Crouch's edgy narration in "Creative Differences" exposes the corporate corruption of creativity. Nicole Lewis underscores hypocrisy and humor in "White Women LOL" with her portrayal of a society woman who is labeled a racist. George Newbern conveys rueful retrospection in "The Tomorrow Box," and in "Lost But Not Forgotten," the author's performance marries playful buoyancy with earnest contemplation. Seven narrators in total create a cohesive listening experience that amplifies the subtleties of relationships in Sittenfeld's resonant collection. *M.F.*

Random House Audio 10.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade: DD ISBN 9798217065219 $22.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217065226 $76.00

BRONSHTEIN IN THE BRONX

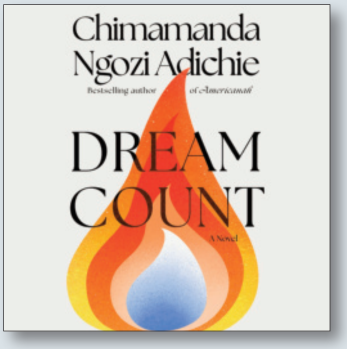
Robert Littell
Read by Adam Grupper

In a tone of authority and wry humor, narrator Adam Grupper portrays Lev Davidovich Bronshtein—better known as Leon Trotsky—as he visits New York City in 1917. Littell's Bronshtein becomes a hero to the socialists scrambling around the Big Apple's streets as he wrestles with questions relating to his revolutionary ideology, his place in his own family, his relationship with Lenin, and his own conscience. Grupper's superb tempo and compassionate tone depict Trotsky's emphatic belief in revolution and workers' rights, traits that make him a government target. Littell depicts fictional events that took place in the 10 weeks the world-famous revolutionary spent in the Bronx before Lenin led the February Revolution weeks later. This audiobook is an extraordinary meditation on purpose, passion, and the price of progress. *R.O.*

Recorded Books 4.75 hrs. Unabridged
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798895941843 $13.64
(also CD, MP3)

DREAM COUNT

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
Read by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie,
Sandra Okuboyejo, A'rese Emokpae,
Janina Edwards



The tone, tempo, and lilting intonation of all four narrators make this listening experience rewarding. This novel—really four connected, finely crafted novellas—simply engages the listener from the start. Three of the major characters are Nigerian women—a travel writer, a successful lawyer, a powerful business woman—and the fourth, also West African, is a maid at a posh hotel. Their stories intertwine. Looking for and finding love is a theme throughout. A set piece based on the 2011 rape of an African maid at a posh New York hotel is re-created fictionally, and the author provides a detailed endnote explaining how she decided to reimagine it. This is Adichie's first novel in more than a decade, and it is a compelling audiobook. *A.D.M.*

Random House Audio 19 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593914847 $28.00 (also CD)
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593914854 $95.00

A compelling audiobook.

RABBIT MOON

Jennifer Haigh
Read by Katharine Chin, Yu-Li Alice Shen

Narrators Katharine Chin and Yu-Li Alice Shen transport listeners with their portrayals of complex characters in this literary audiobook. American Lindsey Litvak, age 22, is fighting for her life in a Shanghai hospital after a hit-and-run accident. Her divorced parents rush to China to be by her side, but they don't speak the language and struggle to navigate their new surroundings. Chin, who serves as the third-person narrator, captures the story's strong sense of place and the tension in the complex family relationships as the story jumps between the present and past. Shen narrates the final chapter through the perspective of Lindsey's adopted younger sister, Grace. Her mature portrayal imbues Grace with depth and emotional growth. A compelling character-driven family drama. *V.T.M.*

Hachette Audio 8.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668646694 $24.99

RABBIT MOON
A NOVEL
JENNIFER HAIGH

A GORGEOUS EXCITEMENT

Cynthia Weiner
Read by Rebecca Lowman

Rebecca Lowman gives a wondrous performance of this debut audiobook inspired by the real-life 1980s "Preppy Murder" case. In the Upper East Side neighborhood filled with WASPs where she lives, 18-year-old Nina Jacobs, who is Jewish, is spending the summer before college with her friends, drinking and experimenting with cocaine. She is drawn to the preppy, seemingly perfect Gardner Reed. She is also grappling with her bipolar mother. Lowman is fully up to the challenge of subtly distinguishing a large cast of mostly young adults. She shines as Nina, whose longing for connection is poignantly rendered. Lowman's propulsive narration transports listeners to an earlier era as she splendidly portrays a young woman whose choices are shaped by misfortune and family trauma. *M.J.*

Random House Audio 13 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217067268 $22.50
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217067275 $95.00

A HOUSE FOR MISS PAULINE

Diana McCaulay
Read by Sasha Frost

Narrator Sasha Frost delivers an outstanding performance as Miss Pauline, a lifelong resident of the village of Mason Hall, Jamaica, who is almost 100 years old. Miss Pauline knows that her time draws near. She hears voices at night, her house has begun making strange noises, and she knows she must right some wrongs. Reflecting on her life with the help of her granddaughter and a local young man, Miss Pauline tries to find the descendants of the legal owner of her land, who disappeared in the 1980s. Frost's delivery, especially her use of a Jamaican accent, proves impressive and moving. She successfully conveys Miss Pauline's confidence and spicy character while showing her warm, tender heart. *A.M.*

Hachette Audio 10.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668646212 $27.99

A HOUSE FOR MISS PAULINE
A NOVEL
DIANA McCAULAY

I LEAVE IT UP TO YOU

Jinwoo Chong
Read by Daniel K. Isaac

Daniel K. Isaac gives a warm, often hilarious, and touching performance of this delightful family saga. When Jack Jr. awakens from a two-year coma, he's shocked to discover just how much his life has changed. With his boyfriend and job gone, he returns to New Jersey to the family he hasn't spoken to in years and their struggling Korean sushi restaurant. What follows is a moving journey of self-discovery as Jack Jr. finds new romantic love—and a newfound love for the people and places he left behind. Isaac captures all of Jack Jr.'s confusion and passion. His comedic timing is impeccable, as are his tender depictions of imitate moments. He excels at voicing secondary characters; the scenes of family bickering are particularly well done. A joyful—and mouthwatering—listen. *L.S.*

Random House Audio 10.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217020393 $22.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217020409 $85.50

HOMESEEKING

Karissa Chen
Read by Katharine Chin,
Kenneth Lee

Narrators Katharine Chin and Kenneth Lee captivate with this 60-year saga. Childhood sweethearts Haiwen and Suchi grow up in the same Shanghai neighborhood before being torn apart by war and time. Suchi's perspective, narrated by Chin, moves forward in time, while Haiwen's, narrated by Lee, moves backward. Chin's voice is warm and emotive, capturing Suchi's personality as she matures. Lee's slightly melodic intonation transitions smoothly between Haiwen and other characters, adding emphasis and variations of Chinese accents. Chin and Lee flawlessly pronounce words in regional dialects, adding to the story's rich texture. As Haiwen and Suchi's stories diverge and intersect at various points in their lives, Chin and Lee's remarkable narration shines. *C.R.*

Penguin Audio 17.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593944059 $27.50
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593944066 $95.00

> *"To top off the experience and the dystopian quality of the book, the LA fires were burning just as we were beginning to record, really adding to the urgency of potential realities Laila presents us."*
> —Narrator Frankie Corzo

THE DREAM HOTEL

Laila Lalami
Read by Frankie Corzo,
Barton Caplan

THE DREAM HOTEL
READ WITH JENNA
A NOVEL
LAILA LALAMI
PULITZER PRIZE FINALIST

This dystopian novel, set in an uncomfortably near future, features an innocent woman who is incarcerated for her dreams. Exceptionally well narrated by Frankie Corzo, with brief bursts of affectless officialese delivered by Barton Caplan, the story works remarkably well as an audiobook. Much of the narrative is the protagonist Sara's thoughts, feelings, and reactions. Corzo perfectly nails the angsty and bewildered tone of Sara's voice and does a fine job with the other characters in this engaging work—reminiscent of Kafka and Orwell had they lived in the Internet Age. Sara and her cohorts' mysterious plights seem frighteningly possible. This eloquently written audiobook lingers with the listener. *A.D.M.*

Random House Audio 11.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217076406 $23.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217076505 $85.50

Photo by Matt Kallish

TILDA IS VISIBLE
Jane Tara
Read by Caroline Lee

Caroline Lee's joyful and witty performance of this humorous and insightful audiobook is a dream listen. With a light, warm intonation, Lee brings to life Tilda, a 52-year-old divorced mother and photographer who wakes up one morning to find one of her fingers and one ear are no longer visible. After visiting her internist, she learns that she has invisibility disorder, a common occurrence for women in their fifties. While there is no cure, Tilda embarks on a wellness journey to alleviate her discomfort, trying meditation and other practices, drawing support from her friends, and even meeting Patrick, a legally blind man whose charm and openness warm her heart. Lee's striking Australian accent settles listeners into Tilda's landscape, and her enunciation is crisp and pleasing to the ears. *M.J.*

Random House Audio 11.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9798217067404 $22.50
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9798217067411 $76.00

JUNIE
Erin Crosby Eckstine
Read by Angel Pean

Narrator Angel Pean's stand-out performance is essential here. Her storytelling skill is consistently riveting, fully embodying these characters and the detailed and occasionally magical world they inhabit. Junie, an enslaved girl in 1800s Alabama, lives with the loss of her sister, Minnie, whose death is a weight on her conscience. Her days of servitude include companionship with Violet, her enslaver's daughter, with whom she shares opinions on literature. An encounter with Minnie's ghost changes Junie's life, opening a new path that could include escaping her captors. The Civil War breaks out, threatening Junie's mission, as does Violet's dangerous suitor. Listeners experience a different kind of historical drama. Pean's skillful delivery fully embodies the setting, and the rich listening experience envelopes listeners in the powerful story. *S.P.C.*

Random House Audio 13.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780593946282 $26.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9780593946299 $95.00

> *The rich listening experience envelopes listeners in the powerful story.*

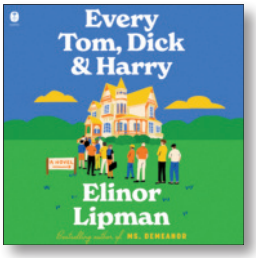
MY DOCUMENTS
Kevin Nguyen
Read by Kelly Marie Tran

Kelly Marie Tran is an excellent choice of narrator for a novel that follows four Vietnamese American cousins whose lives are drastically altered when a wave of violence leads to their community's internment. While Ursula and Alvin remain free, Jen and Duncan are sent to a detention camp, where they struggle with isolation and the harsh conditions. When Jen secretly finds a way to communicate with the outside world, Ursula sees an opportunity to expose what's going on. Tran's narration captures the characters' shifting emotions—fear, resilience, and moral conflict—as they navigate an unsettling reality. Her performance differentiates perspectives while maintaining the story's tense mood, making for a gripping listening experience that highlights both personal stakes and broader social themes. *M.R.*

Random House Audio 10 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9798217065356 $22.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9798217065363 $76.00

EVERY TOM, DICK & HARRY
Elinor Lipman
Read by Piper Goodeve

Piper Goodeve's energetic narration is a perfect match for this funny and charming story, making this a perfectly paced listen. Emma takes over her parents' estate-sale business and lands their biggest client to date. The grand house and its furnishings are overshadowed by its reputation: a previous bed-and-breakfast that also offered services of ill repute. Emma, unaware of the property's history, faces challenges from the proud owners at every step. As she sorts through others' belongings and her feelings about the family business, a new romantic interest emerges. Goodeve differentiates characters effectively, and her nuanced portrayal captures Emma's careful handling of sensitive topics. Pauses indicate a character's thoughtfulness, while raised voices highlight the humor in an unusual funeral scene. *A.L.C.*



Harper Audio 8.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063322288 $26.24

THE PARIS EXPRESS
Emma Donoghue
Read by Justin Avoth

This thrill ride of an audiobook tells the many stories of those onboard Train 721, which crashes in Montparnasse station in October 1895. British narrator Justin Avoth narrates the drama at a good pace and keeps the story moving. Donohue brings her plotting skills, eloquent style, and eye for social mores to the cast of fictional people who are on the train. To the group she adds the real-life playwright John Synge and American painter Henry Trainer, among others. Tension mounts as a young anarchist carries a homemade bomb, a baby is born, and, inexorably, the train plows into the station. It's remembered in a famous photo of the engine dangling out of a parapet. *A.D.M.*

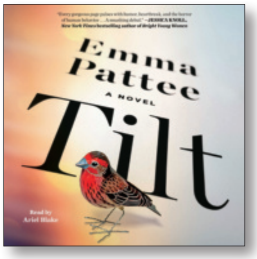
Simon & Schuster Audio 7.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781668123973 $24.99

BOY
Nicole Galland
Read by Ell Potter

Ell Potter delivers a smashing performance of Galland's engrossing novel. The title character is Sander Cooke, an androgynous actor with the Chamberlain's Men in Elizabethan London whose brilliant performances in female roles have made him a celebrity. His best friend, Joan, longs to study, but scholarship is forbidden because she's a woman. So Joan employs cross-dressing to sneak into Sir Francis Bacon's intellectual forums. Being found out could cost her dearly. Potter makes the novel's gender fluidity believable. She highlights Sander's anxiety as he attempts to move into male roles and handles Joan's hunger for knowledge with subtlety and nuance. Potter also captures the backstage workings of an Elizabethan theater troupe: the politics, prejudices, rivalries, and romances. Top-notch historical fiction. *S.J.H.*

Harper Audio   12 hrs.   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063342880 $27.99

TILT
Emma Pattee
Read by Ariel Blake



An earthquake has hit Portland, Oregon, causing widespread chaos, and a woman is trying to find a way home. Ariel Blake narrates this story of nine-months-pregnant Annie, who must find a way to reach her husband and make her way home from crib-shopping through the widespread disorder that has resulted from the quake. Blake's dramatic narration captures Annie's fears and concerns as she talks to "Bean," her unborn child, telling the baby about the earthquake, describing her life with her husband, and pondering her and her husband's careers. Blake's voice quavers as she presents a mother-to-be who is full of emotion and self-reflection. Blake conveys Annie's worries, as well as the day-to-day details of her and her husband's lives while confronting the natural disaster. *S.E.G.*

Simon & Schuster Audio   7 hrs.   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781797186429 $19.99

AUDITION
Katie Kitamura
Read by Traci Kato-Kiriyama

Traci Kato-Kiriyama's magnetic performance of this penetrating psychological study is a wonder to hear. Her skilled narration illuminates the complexities of this meditative story of shifting perceptions. With admirable ease Kato-Kiriyama deftly slips into the persona of the unnamed female protagonist, a 49-year-old married theater actress. Her deliberate pacing and subtly differentiated portrayals of the small cast of writers and actors bring forth the intricate issues at play, which include identity, agency, marriage, motherhood, and career aspirations. Listeners may feel disoriented at times as the relationships among the characters evolve, but the author's sharp writing coupled with Kato-Kiriyama's focused performance keeps listeners intrigued as they sort out character motivations and connections. A uniquely compelling listen. *M.J.*

Penguin Audio   4.75 hrs.   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9798217021338 $18.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9798217021345 $66.50

THE STORY SHE LEFT BEHIND
Patti Callahan Henry
Read by Julia Whelan, Theo Solomon

This mystery explores the emotions felt by the family of a young American novelist who vanished 25 years earlier. Daughter Clara, skillfully portrayed by Julia Whelan, receives a cryptic phone call informing her that she must personally claim her mother's writing satchel. She steels herself and travels to London with her daughter. Once there, the two meet young executor Charlie, voiced with grace and charm by Theo Solomon, who whisks them to his family's country home, away from the Great Smog. There, Clara's stunning discovery upends her world. Delivering alternating points of view, both narrators give well-matched, compelling performances, including a range of American and UK accents. A clarifying author's note narrated by Henry closes the production. *S.D.B.*

Simon & Schuster Audio   12.5 hrs.   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781797192857 $26.99

Both narrators give well-matched, compelling performances.

THE GIRL FROM GREENWICH STREET: A Novel of Hamilton, Burr, and America's First Murder Trial
Lauren Willig
Read by Jane Oppenheimer

Jane Oppenheimer provides a tone of truthfulness to this historical novel highlighting the friction between Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr as they seek to defend a murder suspect in 1800s America. Levi Weeks is accused of murdering Emma Sands, a lively young woman who disappeared from her boardinghouse. Lawyers Hamilton and Burr have political aspirations as each tries to outdo the other in defending Weeks, while Sands is all but forgotten. Oppenheimer's diction recalls the period, while her seamless slipping in and out of "thou" and "thee" perfectly reflects Quaker speech. Oppenheimer's delivery of Lauren Willig's superb storytelling turns the novel into a courtroom drama, a murder mystery based on an actual case, and an investigation of the motives behind two of history's most famous rivals. Entertaining, intelligent listening. *S.J.H.*

Harper Audio   12.25 hrs.   Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063306141 $27.99

THE CURIOUS KITTEN AT THE CHIBINEKO KITCHEN

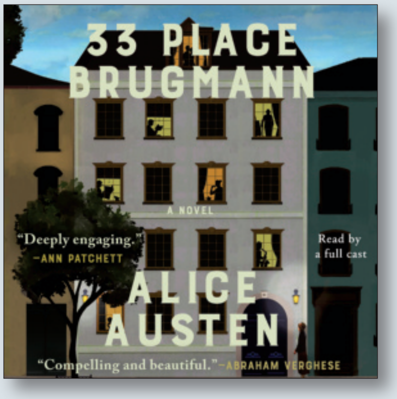
Yuta Takahashi, Cat Anderson [Trans.]
Read by Hanako Footman

Hanako Footman's narration is as warm and delicious as the meals at the Chibineko Kitchen. Four intertwined stories revolve around Kotoko, a young woman, and Kai, the thoughtful chef who works at the small restaurant with its resident cat, located in a remote Japanese seaside village. Chibineko Kitchen serves remembrance meals rumored to have a mystical ability to summon departed loved ones. Kotoko has recently lost her brother and makes a trip to the restaurant, which begins a series of encounters. Footman's soft, calm tone and precise pronunciation of Japanese words and places create the perfect ambiance for this translated work steeped in Japanese culture, locations, traditions, and sensibilities. Keep a notepad handy if you plan to capture the recipe in each chapter's transcendent encounter. *L.T.*

Penguin Audio 4.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9798217064373 $15.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9798217064380 $57.00

33 PLACE BRUGMANN

Alice Austen
Read by Shiromi Arserio, Jilly Bond, Nicholas Boulton, Billie Fulford-Brown, Danielle Cohen, Raphael Corkhill, Joshua Reilly, Matthew Lloyd Davies, James Meunier, Simon Slater



Alice Austen's debut novel is a small jewel, and the multiple narratives by expert audio actors bring light to each facet. The tenants at 33 Place Brugmann in Brussels just before the Nazi occupation live fascinating, if ordinary, lives. But as everything changes, intimate individual portraits of the residents, wonderfully performed, move the plot forward, heighten the tension, and illustrate the wartime dangers each character faces. From building manager Jan Everard to nosy harridan Miss Hobart in 3R, from architect François Sauvin to art dealer Leo Raphaël and their families—each story is filled with intelligent observations, philosophical musings, ongoing mysteries, and stirrings of romance. Austen's compassionate look at a group of people trapped by circumstance allows each textured performance to ring with truth. *S.J.H.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 11.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781668137703 $26.99

A small jewel.

COUNTERATTACKS AT THIRTY

Won-pyung Sohn, Sean Lin Halbert [Trans.]
Read by Jo Yuan

Narrator Jo Yuan gives an animated performance in this witty literary translation about South Korean corporate office life. Kim Jihye is a 30-year-old intern at Diamant Academy, an adult education company. Originally hoping to be hired as a permanent employee, she comes to realize that this is likely never going to happen. Instead, another intern, Lee Gyuok, is brought on. Together, they form a small group with two other co-workers to engage in small acts of rebellion against injustices through relatively harmless pranks. As the story progresses, Jihye grows increasingly assertive, a trait that is captured by Yuan's intensifying narration. A realistic and relatable quick listen about exploitative office life and the challenges of finding empowerment. *V.T.M.*

Harper Audio 7 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063378124 $24.29

BACK AFTER THIS

Linda Holmes
Read by Linda Holmes

Author/narrator Linda Holmes capitalizes on her media experience in this snappy comic novel. Cecily Foster has agreed to host a new podcast—even if it means she'll also have to be the star, follow the advice of a popular relationship influencer, and have it called "20 Dates." A deal with her boss is the only way she'd ever consider a show revolving around her own first dates, especially when she meets a much more likely romantic candidate on her own. Holmes portrays Foster with an appropriate amount of witty banter, making her funny and sharp and allowing her love of her craft to shine in a way that is both informative and captivating. *E.J.F.*

LINDA HOLMES
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF EVVIE DRAKE STARTS OVER
A NOVEL
Back After This

Random House Audio 9.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780593909379 $22.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9780593909386 $85.50

THE JACKAL'S MISTRESS

Chris Bohjalian
Read by Marni Penning, Chris Bohjalian

Narrator Marni Penning performs this story of unlikely friendship and divided loyalty during the chaos of the American Civil War. Southerner Libby Steadman does all she can to keep the family gristmill going while her husband is away fighting. When she discovers a horribly injured Union soldier, she has to weigh the dangers and benefits of keeping him alive behind enemy lines. Penning captures Libby's strength and grit, along with other unique characters. Her thoughtful and well-paced performance guides listeners through intense battles and loving domestic moments with equal care. The audiobook also includes a bonus interview with author Chris Bohjalian. *V.B.*

Random House Audio 9.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9798217018697 $22.50
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9798217018703 $85.50

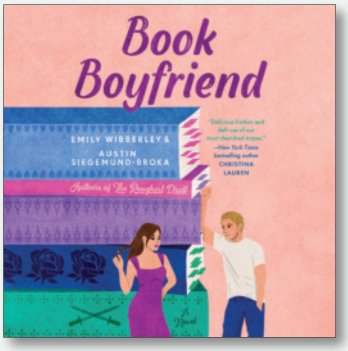
Contemporary romances seem to be stronger than ever in the past year or so, and it's easy to see why they're so popular in the audio format. Reading through *AudioFile* reviews, words like "authentic," "realistic," and "heartwarming" often describe recent contemporary narrations. It's that genuine experience narrators convey that shines through so clearly in contemporaries.

The characters in these six featured romances are all struggling to find a new normal and to define themselves against a rapidly shifting landscape. Listeners will be able to empathize with their feelings of disorientation and loneliness, especially as the narrators draw on their skills to tease out human connection, providing comfort to listeners as they share the stories. In several of this issue's picks, characters are trying to give grief its proper place even as they pursue relationships. In the other titles in this column, characters deal with breakups, exes, and the emotional upheaval that follows.

Whatever the bumps in your road, figurative or literal, these talented narrators are here to provide stellar entertainment. Listeners can't go wrong with these six contemporary picks. As always, love your listening. –*Caitlin Augusta*

Find more Tease online at
audiofilemagazine.com/articles

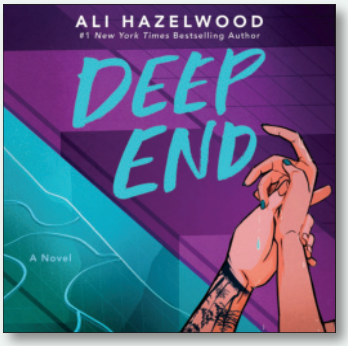
BOOK BOYFRIEND
Emily Wibberley, Austin Siegemund-Broka
Read by Helen Laser


Book Boyfriend
EMILY WIBBERLEY & AUSTIN SIEGEMUND-BROKA
Authors of The Roughest Draft
A Novel

Resentment drips off of narrator Helen Laser's tongue in this enemies-to-lovers slow-burn romance set at an Elytheum Courts fanfiction conference. Jennifer Worth uses the conference to escape a bad breakup, only to discover that her co-worker/archnemesis Scott Daniels is an attendee. Laser plays up Jennifer's hurt feelings over Scott's denigration of her favorite genres and workplace ideas as she tries to best him in conference competitions. Jennifer's internal pep talks sound genuine in Laser's confident, well-phrased narration. Distinct voices for actors who play book characters and for conference attendees flesh out the immersive experience. As Jennifer and Scott decide to pursue a romance, Laser turns up the steam and shows both their vulnerabilities. Laser gracefully steers Scott and Jennifer into a happy resolution. *C.A.*

Penguin Audio 10.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780593951446 $20.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9780593951453 $85.50

DEEP END
Ali Hazelwood
Read by Thérèse Plummer, Ben Holtzmuller



Thérèse Plummer and Ben Holtzmuller deliver a captivating duet narration of this thoughtful romance. Stanford diver Scarlett, voiced by Plummer, has her future meticulously planned—if she can overcome her recent diving block, pass German, and ace the MCAT. With so much on her plate, relationships have never been a priority. Pen is a fellow diver on Scarlett's team. Lukas, portrayed by Holtzmuller, is a Swedish Olympic swimmer—who is also Pen's ex. When Pen shares a secret connecting Lukas and Scarlett, things heat up. Plummer captures Scarlett's anxieties with well-placed pauses and inflections, while Holtzmuller's subtle Swedish accent and steady cadence add to Lukas's unassuming charm. Their performances bring depth and authenticity to this engaging romance. *S.K.G.*

Penguin Audio 13.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780593951422 $26.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9780593951439 $95.00

GIVE ME BUTTERFLIES
Jillian Meadows
Read by Jason Clarke, Victoria Connolly

Give Me Butterflies
A Novel
JILLIAN MEADOWS

Narrators Victoria Connolly and Jason Clarke enchant listeners in this heartfelt contemporary romance. Millie loves her job as an entomology curator at a museum; now she has the opportunity to interview for the position of department director. Finn is learning how to handle his job at the museum while raising his nieces after the death of his sister. These two may need each other to make their dreams come true. Connolly's soft, melodic voice and subtle nuances reflect Millie's passion, vulnerabilities, and newfound love, while Clarke's deep, rich tone captures Finn's broody exterior and kind interior. Both narrators use authentic-sounding voices in the delivery of dialogue, making this a memorable audio experience that will leave listeners smiling. *J.J.M.*

Harper Audio 10.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063416185 $27.99

audible ORIGINAL
LUCY PARKER
MIS-DIRECTED
STARRING NICOLA COUGHLAN & GWILYM LEE
ONLY FROM audible

MISDIRECTED
Lucy Parker
Read by Nicola Coughlan, Gwilym Lee

Fans of "Bridgerton" will devour this audio-only contemporary romance narrated by screen actors Nicola Coughlan and Gwilym Lee. Hattie Murton, reluctant star of the fictional TV show "Leicester Square," lives her worst nightmare when the screenwriters create a love arc for her with her unpleasant costar, Anthony Rafe. Coughlan channels Hattie's underdog quality, and her knowledge of on-set antics comes across in her light, swift reading. Lee's deep voice chips away at Anthony's impenetrable facade to reveal his long-held interest in Hattie. Both narrators excel at their portrayals of the opposite sex, ensuring that the alternating chapters are seamlessly conveyed. Although Coughlan's diction could be a little crisper, this lushly romantic listen is a stand-out audio. *C.A.*

Audible, Inc. 10.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: $13.63

Promise Me Sunshine
CARA BASTONE
AUTHOR OF READY OR NOT

PROMISE ME SUNSHINE
Cara Bastone
Read by Alex Finke

Narrated by Alex Finke, this rom-com follows Lenny, a young woman who has just lost her best friend to cancer and can't figure out how to live without her. At her new nanny job, Lenny meets Miles, the grumpy uncle of her babysitting charge who checks in on his niece daily. Miles is no stranger to grief, and he agrees to help Lenny complete a "Live Again" list that her best friend wrote for her before she passed. Finke is animated and lively, even when Lenny is at her lowest. Finke's inflections, timely pauses, nervous laughter, and sobbing will endear Lenny to listeners, and the slow-burn romance between Lenny and Miles is equal parts heartbreaking and heartwarming as they navigate loss and love again together. *C.A.P.*

Random House Audio 11.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780593821497 $22.50
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9780593821503 $95.00

WORK in Progress
A Novel
KAT MACKENZIE

WORK IN PROGRESS
Kat Mackenzie
Read by Angela Dawe

Come aboard an unexpected journey through the Scottish countryside with narrator Angela Dawe as she delivers a lively, comedic performance. Alice is finally taking her long-awaited trip to Scotland in an effort to repair her broken heart. She embarks on a bus tour with a cast of kooky fellow tourists—quirky older women in search of adventure who are led by a charming, devilish tour guide named Robbie, with whom Alice butts heads repeatedly. Dawe has the perfect delivery for this wacky rom-com. While the snarky romance between Alice and Robbie is performed with pep, Dawe's portrayals of the colorful supporting cast sell this entire performance. Delivered in a perfect balance of camp, fluttery romance, and joy, this is a performance with heart. *G.M.*

Harper Audio 11.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063379060 $27.99

Romance Preview

LINDSAY MAPLE
Holly Jolly July
Read by Lauren Sweet, Angelina Rocca

On the set of a holiday movie filming in July, Mariah and Ellie's adventures have them finding the holiday spirit despite the heat.

Contemporary
Harlequin Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.:
Release date: June 17

KATY NYQUIST
A Holy Maiden's Guide to Getting Kidnapped: Scandals of the Gifted, Book 1
Read by Hollie Jackson

Ysabel's status as a Holy Maiden threatens her life until Dark Lord Caine shows up at her door.

Fantasy
Podium Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.:
Release date: June 17

ADRIENNE GUNN
Fan Favorite
Read by Patti Murin

Edie jumps onto a reality dating show starring her high school boyfriend.

Contemporary
Hachette Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.:
Release date: June 24

MIA SOSA
When Javi Dumped Mari
Read by Gisela Chípe, André Santana

Javier and Marisol agreed in college to vet each other's dates, but now that Mari's engaged, do the rules still apply?

Contemporary
Penguin Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.:
Release date: June 24

ALEXA MARTIN
How to Sell a Romance
Read by Khaya Fraites

Kindergarten teacher Emerson takes on a side hustle, but her company's being investigated by journalist Lucas Miller, the father of one of her students.

Contemporary
Penguin Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.:
Release date: July 15

Talking with Author Abby Jimenez

By Caitlin Augusta

▶ *New York Times* bestselling and Library Reads Hall of Fame author Abby Jimenez shares her thoughts on audiobooks, narrators, and good food.

AudioFile: Can you tell us a little about your newest title, *Say You'll Remember Me*?

Abby Jimenez: It's a book about making and losing memories. It's the story of Samantha and Xavier, who have a whirlwind, amazing first date right before Samantha leaves to care for her mother, who has early-onset dementia in California. I want to say it's my most heartbreaking book yet with a happily-ever-after at the end.

AF: And what can you tell us about the audiobook version?

AJ: I love my audiobooks so much. I'm extremely involved in all my audiobooks' production because audiobooks are 95% of how I read, and obviously a narrator can make or break an audiobook. Hachette Audio allows me to be super involved. I handpick my narrators; I do extensive auditions. Xavier is a very dry, very reserved hero . . . I really wanted someone to embody his personality and the tone. So I looked outside of my normal bucket of narrators, and when I heard Matt Lanter's audition, I said, "That's my Xavier." He absolutely nailed it. And then there's also Christine Lakin, who is a perennial favorite of mine; this is the third book she's done for me. This is my first duet narration on a full-length book. And I love it. I'm obsessed with it. I'm probably going to do it every time. I just absolutely love what they've done with the audiobook.

Author Abby Jimenez

AF: Do you think about the audiobook at any stage in the writing process?

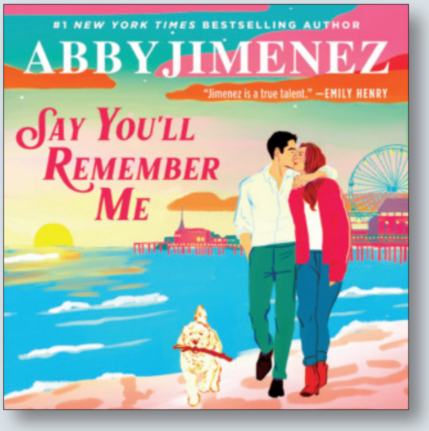
AJ: Part of my writing process is to read my book out loud. It's the final stage of my edit process. The last thing I do is I call my sister-in-law, and I read the book out loud to her because I catch so many things when I read it out loud. When I'm writing the book, I'm thinking about the audiobook, and when I read it out loud, it's almost like I'm hearing my audiobook before it's been recorded. Everything I do is to deliver a good audiobook over the printed book, if I'm being honest. That's how I like to read books, so the audiobook is always at the forefront of my mind.

AF: What role do audiobooks play in your life?

AJ: I listen to probably 20 or so audiobooks a year, which is a lot for me, considering all the other things I'm doing. Audiobooks are what I listen to when I make "The Sauce." I'm Sicilian. Three to four times a year I'll make a huge, giant batch of fresh pasta sauce that we freeze and use throughout the year. So, audiobooks are like my respite. That's what I do when I want to relax. I listen to an audiobook.

SAY YOU'LL REMEMBER ME

Abby Jimenez
Read by Christine Lakin, Matt Lanter


#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
ABBY JIMENEZ
"Jimenez is a true talent." —EMILY HENRY
SAY YOU'LL REMEMBER ME

Narrators Christine Lakin and Matt Lanter deliver a heartbreaking and uplifting duet narration featuring a geographically challenged couple. Samantha, a marketing rep of mustard, and Xavier, a surly veterinarian, spend their first date locked overnight in an escape room. Shortly after, Samantha goes to California to care for her mother, who has dementia. Lakin communicates a natural, deeply felt empathy for Samantha's impossible family situation. She also sells the sweet quality of the long-distance romance. Lanter's clipped sentences depict Xavier's protective layers and his willingness to do anything for Samantha. Laughter and other utterances sometimes add to the humor and sometimes distract from both narrators' effective use of pathos. The production quality is impressive, and Lakin and Lanter's palpable longing makes this an exhilarating listen. *C.A.*

Hachette Audio 10 hrs. Unabridged
Trade: DD ISBN 9781668644997 $27.99

An exhilarating listen.

AF: What does your fan base say about your audiobooks?

AJ: They love them. I'm known for having very good audiobooks. So they're always very excited to see who I pick. I feel like my readers trust me a lot. I tell them, "You gotta pick up the audiobook"—even if that's not the way they normally consume reading. I think it's converted a lot of people, actually. I always pick my narrators. I always let my publisher know the audiobook is very important to me. The way that other authors feel when they open up their box of finished copies and they see their finished book for the first time, that's how I feel when they send me the first draft of my audiobook recording. I've always been very involved.

AF: Any upcoming projects you want to mention?

AJ: *Say You'll Remember Me* just came out, of course. We just announced the title of my next book. It's called *The Night We Met.*

AF: Narrators?

AJ: Not yet. I'm still thinking about it, but I'm probably going to choose one very, very early because I would personally like to shoot for celebrity narrators for this book—just to keep it fun and exciting for my readers and for me.

AF: Speaking of fun, want to share your favorite cake flavor with our listeners?

AJ: Coconut lime verbena cupcake from my bakery, Nadia Cakes. ■

More Listening

THE FALL RISK: A Short Story

Abby Jimenez, read by Julia Whelan, Connor Crais

Brilliance Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

THE FRIEND ZONE

Abby Jimenez, read by Teddy Hamilton, Erin Mallon

Hachette Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

JUST FOR THE SUMMER

Abby Jimenez, read by Christine Lakin, Zachary Webber

Hachette Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

LIFE'S TOO SHORT

Abby Jimenez, read by Christine Lakin, Zachary Webber

Hachette Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

YOURS TRULY

Abby Jimenez, read by Kyla Garcia, Zachary Webber

Hachette Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

THE #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
ABBY JIMENEZ
"Jimenez is a true talent!" —EMILY HENRY
JUST FOR THE SUMMER
JIMENEZ
The Fall Risk
The Friend ZONE
ABBY JIMENEZ

IN THE WORLD
Maxim Gorky
Read by Nicholas Boulton

Golden Voice Nicholas Boulton gives yet another excellent performance in this second part of Gorky's three-part autobiography. Sometimes titled in English *My Apprenticeship*, this work, published in 1916, covers his youth and is as unsentimental as the first part, *My Childhood*. Boulton is superb—as he is in all the many other Naxos classics of Russian literature that he's narrated. His English-accented voice is clear in delivering narrative, and his exquisite expressiveness captures the dialogue of the varied characters. Boulton seems to be the voice for Naxos's Russian literature productions, and I hope that he continues to be so. *M.T.F.*

Naxos AudioBooks 13.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade: DD ISBN 9781781984918 $27.00

MIDDLEMARCH
George Eliot
Read by Alison Larkin

MIDDLEMARCH
GEORGE ELIOT

Alison Larkin's bright narration takes listeners to the charming fictional town of Middlemarch, England. Individual goals, loves, and desires intertwine as early-nineteenth-century characters find themselves navigating restrictive social norms amid political and social change. Larkin's narration captures the complex residents as they come to terms with the new world they find themselves in. Her performance depicts the rich interactions and interconnected relationships of the novel's many characters as she gives them all believable voices. Larkin's intelligent narration makes delving into this weighty classic a joy. *V.B.*

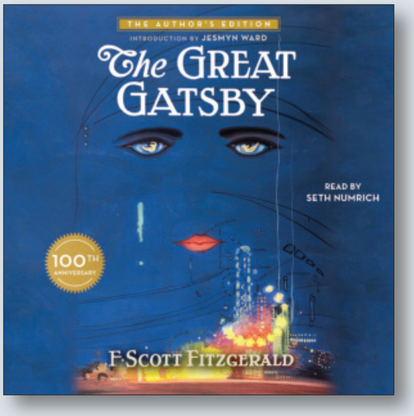
Dreamscape 36.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781666662948 $27.42

TWENTY YEARS AFTER
Alexandre Dumas
Read by Bill Homewood

With his bass voice and vocal flair, narrator Bill Homewood transports listeners to France, where we meet D'Artagnan 20 years after his adventures in *The Three Musketeers*. Cardinal Mazarin, the power behind the throne, summons D'Artagnan and commands him to find his former friends, Athos, Aramis, and Porthos. France is on the brink of a civil war, and England is in turmoil, so the hated Mazarin needs someone to do his bidding. Will the musketeers respond, or will honor, loyalty, and their fraternal bond transcend the turbulent times and the cardinal's machinations? Homewood's expressive voice, with its wide range, pairs perfectly with this story about adventure and intrigue. His pronunciation of French words adds pizzazz, and his vocal agility gives each character a unique voice. *A.M.*

Naxos AudioBooks 29.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781781984925 $63.00

THE GREAT GATSBY
F. Scott Fitzgerald, Jesmyn Ward [Intro.]
Read by Seth Numrich, Eleanor Lanahan, James L. W. West III



Seth Numrich narrates this classic Jazz Age novel with an introduction by Jesmyn Ward, foreword by Eleanor Lanahan, and afterword by James L.W. West III. The story follows the mysterious Jay Gatsby through the eyes of Nick Carraway and Nick's cousin, Daisy. Numrich captures Nick's optimism and Daisy's softness with his lively narration. Excelling at long passages full of winding phrases, Numrich brings this novel, now 100 years old, to life. Ward's illuminating introduction prepares listeners for a new experience with Gatsby. Lanahan, Fitzgerald's granddaughter, shares her own history with the text in a sure, comforting voice. West provides context on Fitzgerald's composition and text in a serious, gravelly voice. This audiobook, which includes the author's final revisions, is an exquisite listening experience. *C.R.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 6 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668130810 $18.99

An exquisite listening experience.

BARTLEBY, THE SCRIVENER
Herman Melville
Read by Edoardo Ballerini

In the days before typewriters and copy machines, there were scriveners—people who meticulously copied documents for lawyers and businessmen. Golden Voice narrator Edoardo Ballerini captures the intelligent, genteel, and, finally, compassionate voice of the narrator of this classic story, who hires a quiet scrivener named Bartleby for his law firm. At first, all is well as Bartleby produces excellent work, but one day when he is assigned a task, Bartleby replies simply: "I would prefer not to." The listener is then led into Herman Melville's fascinating examination of loneliness, abandonment, and depression in nineteenth-century society. With assurance and a fine ear for detail, Ballerini delivers this sensitive, unsparing 1853 classic, which was first published in multiple parts—similar to today's podcasts. *B.P.*

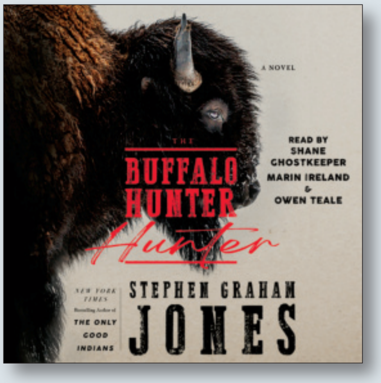
Reluctant Poet, Inc. 1.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798228475137 $10.43
(also CD, MP3)

BAT EATER AND OTHER NAMES FOR CORA ZENG
Kylie Lee Baker
Read by Natalie Naudus

Natalie Naudus embodies anxiety and fear of the supernatural with razor-sharp precision. At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cora Zeng's sister, Delilah, is murdered in a hate crime: The killer shouts "bat eater" before pushing her in front of a train. Now Cora is a crime scene cleaner, and she's noticed an increase in the unexplained murders of Asian women whose bodies are staged with bat corpses. Naudus voices Cora's obsessive thoughts as she navigates a world in which anyone could be her sister's killer. Then Delilah's restless ghost begins haunting Cora's apartment, and Cora worries she's spiraling into madness. Naudus's meticulous pacing and authentic depiction of Cora's fears will keep listeners deliciously on edge. *A.K.R.*

Harlequin Audio 8.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781488233454 $27.99

THE BUFFALO HUNTER HUNTER
Stephen Graham Jones
Read by Shane Ghostkeeper, Marin Ireland, Owen Teale


A NOVEL
THE
BUFFALO HUNTER
Hunter
READ BY SHANE GHOSTKEEPER MARIN IRELAND & OWEN TEALE
NEW YORK TIMES Bestselling Author of THE ONLY GOOD INDIANS
STEPHEN GRAHAM JONES

Listeners don't just experience a fascinating historical drama—they also become steeped in a bloody gothic Western. Stellar performances are the center of this compelling listening experience. Narrator Marin Ireland fully embodies the beleaguered humanities professor who, while deep diving into the campus archive, discovers the story of her ancestors. At the same time, she is struggling with her tenure committee. In a deft transition back to 1912, Owen Teale's performance of a Lutheran pastor exhibits gravitas as he slowly unwinds the secrets of his relationship with Good Stab, a Blackfeet Indian who mysteriously appears in his congregation. Shane Ghostkeeper provides Good Stab with a subtle yet ferocious performance as the two face each other's buried truths. Complete with creative production touches, the result is a dark, satisfying listen. *S.P.C.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 15 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668117323 $29.99

A dark, satisfying listen.

SWEET FRAGRANCE OF LIFE: and Other Horror Stories
Elizabeth Schwartz
Read by Elizabeth Schwartz, Yelena Shmulenson

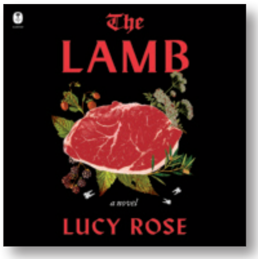
The author, a renowned Jewish singer, narrates her first short story collection, an incredible selection of horror stories featuring Jewish characters. In the title work, a young woman hopeful for new romance is worried about people disappearing from her apartment building. Each story is wonderfully unsettling in its balance between historical accuracy and horror told through an insightful feminist lens. Schwartz speaks in a smooth voice that, coupled with her descriptive prose, brings even the most unsympathetic character to life. Schwartz shifts from English to Yiddish with careful attention. The stories in this brief collection are all masterfully performed. Shmulenson follows with a commanding performance of the collection entirely in Yiddish. *J.M.M.*

SueMedia Productions 3.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798228318816 $20.95
(also CD, MP3)

WILD SPACES
S. L. Coney
Read by Nick Mondelli

While the onset of adolescence is traumatic enough in itself, the young protagonist in this eerie audiobook ends up facing so much more. Narrator Nick Mondelli captures the confusion of a preteen boy whose perfect life in coastal South Carolina is thrown into turmoil at the appearance of his mother's estranged father, whose overly long stay leads to tension between his parents. Even worse, the boy is dealing with unusual changes inside himself. Mondelli is equally skilled at animating the adults, all of whom are hiding secrets from the boy, especially the bizarre grandfather. Mondelli's delivery deftly reflects the pressure building up within these characters. Thanks to his efforts, there's little surprise that their dysfunctional family dynamics are headed to an even darker place in this creepy production. *D.E.M.*

Dreamscape Media 2.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781666643183 $15.26



THE LAMB
Lucy Rose
Read by Emma Rydal

Emma Rydal's intense performance as Margot, a child living with her cannibalistic mother ("Mama"), will remain with listeners long after the devastating climax of this audiobook. Throughout her childhood, lost and wayward travelers of all ages, people deemed "strays," are lured inside their home, where they're murdered and eaten. All of this Rydal recounts to listeners with the matter-of-factness one might express about raising cattle. Margot's school days are a stark contrast as she spends time alongside a caring bus driver and explores friendship with schoolmate Abbie. Rydal's warm, genuine character portrayals connect Margot to possibilities beyond those at home. Rydal deepens the visceral experience of this must-listen production with her unsettling depiction of Mama's mercurial temperament and her girlfriend Eden's casual cruelty. *J.R.T.*

Harper Audio 7.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063374638 $26.99

NEMESIS

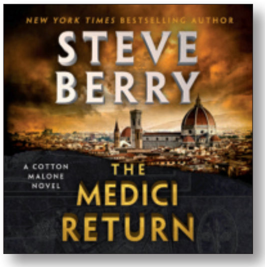
Gregg Hurwitz
Read by Scott Brick

Evan, an orphan and trained killer, is back in this riveting thriller. While the author does a magnificent job with pacing and story development, he shines with dialogue. And Scott Brick is sensational. Anything Brick narrates is a sure bet, and he really is at his best here. Evan and his pal Tommy have a falling out and find themselves at odds with each other. Complicating their friend-foe relationship is a group of trained assassins who want Tommy dead. Meanwhile, a not-so-honorable family gets caught in the middle of the crosshairs, a situation that tests each man's moral code. Brick devotes attention to every voice, especially Tommy's, which is fantastic. His delivery of the tired, old ex-military gunrunner's quippy, twangy speech is remarkable. His accents and inflections boost the listening experience. *M.B.*

Macmillan Audio 16.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250379993 $32.99 (also CD)
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250379986 $39.99

THE MEDICI RETURN:
Cotton Malone, Book 19

Steve Berry
Read by Scott Brick



Scott Brick's pacing and level of intensity are perfect for Steve Berry's latest Cotton Malone novel. His baritone pitch reflects the gravitas of the unusual situation the former Justice Department operative finds himself in. In the 16th century, the Medicis loaned a large sum of money to the Vatican. A written papal promise to repay the loan, never honored, is now worth trillions of euros. A right-wing politician, Eric Casaburi, claims to be a Medici and heir to the promissory note. Does a copy still exist? Can DNA prove Casaburi is a Medici? How will the church pay such a huge sum? Brick handles it all with seeming ease. *S.J.H.*

Hachette Audio 14 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668645024 $31.99

THE SAVAGE, NOBLE DEATH OF BABS DIONNE

Ron Currie
Read by Lisa Flanagan

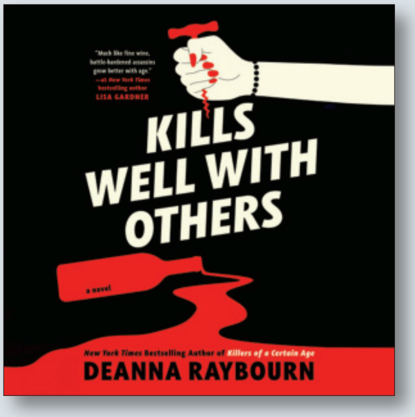
Lisa Flanagan uses the entire box of crayons to depict this mystery's colorful characters, who are led by a doozy of a Franco-American crime boss, Babs Dionne. The drug-running queenpin featured in Currie's bloody revenge tale runs the town of Waterville, Maine, with impunity until someone murders her youngest daughter, Sis. You can almost hear Flanagan's lips curl in blind fury as Sis goes missing and is eventually found dead. Currie knows the scenery and delights in exploring every crooked nook and cranny. Flanagan allows a modicum of empathy to creep into her voice as she portrays Babs's love for her cohorts. Flanagan's musical tempo adds to the gruesome yet darkly funny story. *R.O.*

Penguin Audio 10.5 hrs Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217019557 $22.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217019564 $85.50

> *"Deanna Raybourn knows how to write interesting, fun, and complex women, and getting to play Billie and her fellow assassins was pure joy!"*
> —Narrator Jane Oppenheimer

KILLS WELL WITH OTHERS

Deanna Raybourn
Read by Jane Oppenheimer, Christina Delaine


"Much like fine wine, battle-hardened assassins grow better with age."
—#1 New York Times bestselling author
LISA GARDNER
KILLS WELL WITH OTHERS
a novel
New York Times Bestselling Author of Killers of a Certain Age
DEANNA RAYBOURN

Jane Oppenheimer and Christina Delaine offer outstanding performances as four 50-something retired assassins find themselves back in the game, sponsored by a mysterious entity called "The Museum." After the death of one of their own, The Museum believes there's a security leak. Bored with their retirement lives, Billie, Helen, Mary Alice, and Natalie relish the opportunity to get back to the work they love: killing bad people. Oppenheimer, as Billie, handles the first-person action with exasperated humor. Her range is fluid, allowing each woman her own quirky personality. Delaine's lush, rich tones bring the objective third-person descriptions a necessary gravitas while maintaining the story's underlying humor. Terrific narrations, twisty plotting, and laugh-out-loud moments make this second book in Raybourn's delightful series a must-listen. *S.J.H.*

Penguin Audio 10.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217015887 $22.00

THE GHOSTS OF ROME: Rome Escape Line, Book 2

Joseph O'Connor
Read by Stephen Hogan, Barnaby Edwards, Aoife Duffin, David John, Gertrude Toma, Laurence Bouvard

The second novel in Joseph O'Connor's proposed trilogy bristles with life. Superb performances from a talented cast reveal the thoughts and emotions of a group of righteous men and women who saved hundreds from Nazi brutality. In return for the Pope's agreeing to remain neutral, Vatican City is forbidden to the German occupiers. In this audiobook inspired by the true story of Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty, an escape line called "The Choir" operates within Vatican walls. The group faces constant danger from Obersturmbannführer Hauptmann, while Hauptmann himself faces Hitler's displeasure because of the high number of escapes taking place. Through individual statements and recorded transcripts, the narrators portray ordinary people doing extraordinary things. O'Connor's prose is lyrical, and each person's story feels authentic. Stunning listening. *S.J.H.*

Dreamscape 11.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781666675696 $34.99

OVERKILL: Ali Reynolds, Book 18

J.A. Jance
Read by Karen Ziemba

Ali Reynolds takes a call from Clarice, her husband's ex-wife. Clarice's husband is dead, and she is accused of his murder, but she doesn't remember doing it. Narrator Karen Ziemba ably performs this whodunit. Ali uses her artificial intelligence bot, Frigg, for the investigation. Ziemba gives the bot an upbeat, eager-to-please voice that fits Frigg's persona. Frigg sometimes mishandles the idioms in the English language like "being trained" for "being railroaded" or "Mother's the word" for "mum's the word." Ziemba's presentation of the criminal perpetrators is skillful, but her standout performance is Frigg. Overall, Ziemba's presentation weaves the elements of the plot together and provides comic relief. Fans will be delighted. *E.E.S.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 10.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781797189789 $25.99
(also CD)

THE SUMMER GUESTS: The Martini Club, Book 2

Tess Gerritsen
Read by Hillary Huber

THE SUMMER GUESTS
A THRILLER
TESS GERRITSEN
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

Is this audiobook delivered by a full cast? No, just the immensely talented Hillary Huber. In this second installment of the Martini Club series, Huber crafts a distinct voice for each male and female character, immersing listeners in the search for a missing teenage girl in the club's hometown of Purity, Maine. The retired CIA agents of the Martini Club use their skills to stay ahead of the police chief, uncovering long-held deadly secrets that will forever change their town. The story unfolds through alternating viewpoints, deepening the suspense. Huber masterfully portrays the main characters, the teenagers, and a very proper family matriarch, bringing them to life with nuance and well-defined personalities. The result is an engrossing, expertly narrated audiobook that keeps listeners thoroughly entertained. *E.Q.*

Brilliance Audio 9 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781501267994 $35.99

An engrossing, expertly narrated audiobook that keeps listeners thoroughly entertained.

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

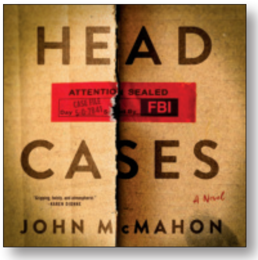
Gillian McAllister
Read by Emilia Fox

Narrator Emilia Fox does a fantastic job showcasing the range of emotions in this addictive thriller. It's Camilla's first day back at work after her maternity leave, and she's on edge from not being able to reach her husband, Luke. Police arrive to tell her that Luke has been identified as being involved in a hostage situation. She goes from scared to disbelieving as it's revealed that kind and charming Luke is the gunman. What happens next, which alternates between the points of view of Camilla and the hostage negotiator, is a shocking sequence of events that will captivate listeners. Matter-of-fact tones from the police contrast with Camilla's tightly voiced fears. Fox does it all expertly: a Scottish burr, desperate yells, and a voice coarse with emotion. *A.L.C.*

Harper Audio 13 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063338456 $26.99

HEAD CASES

John McMahon
Read by Will Damron



Will Damron brings alive FBI Agent Gardner Camden and the rest of the elite team of unconventional agents in the Patterns & Recognition Unit. They must race against time to hunt down a serial killer who is targeting other serial killers. Damron's strong narration creates a group of likable and believable characters. In particular, he draws out the thoroughly analytical Gardner's awareness of his unique personality traits and the challenges he faces when interacting with others. Damron's strong characterization of the killer infuses additional tension into the story. His timing is well matched to the twisty plot, building suspense and allowing the occasional humorous moments to shine. *K.J.P.*

Macmillan Audio 9.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250384270 $19.99

THE UNDOING OF VIOLET CLAYBOURNE
Emily Critchley
Read by Nathalie Buscombe

This is the ideal audiobook for those who enjoy literate, dark family dramas with a gothic vibe. The crisp, posh English voice of Nathalie Buscombe introduces a quartet of young women whose lives are ruined by a freak shooting accident and the destructive aftermath. Lonely, middle-class Gillian longs to be a part of the social elite, who are represented by the Claybourne family. The novel explores misguided ambition, snobbery, manipulation, and betrayal. Buscombe gives Emmeline, the glamorous, arrogant oldest Claybourne sister, a cold, authoritative voice. Youngest sister Violet sounds skittish and excitable. While the story is driven by events in 1938, it concludes 60 years later. The steadying voice of Buscombe leads listeners through the psychological turmoil. *D.L.G.*

Recorded Books 12 hrs. Unabridged
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798895940983 $25.00
(also CD, MP3)

HANG ON ST. CHRISTOPHER: Sean Duffy, Book 8
Adrian McKinty
Read by Gerard Doyle

Golden Voice narrator Gerard Doyle once again brings the quirkiness and erudition of D.I. Sean Duffy to life as he takes on a case that his boss, who is away on vacation, can't handle. It's 1992 in Belfast, and the murder of an IRA assassin means that Duffy must clock more time hunting for the killer despite his efforts to cut back as he nears retirement. Never mind that his investigation takes him halfway around the world and threatens to rattle the cages of both the IRA and the CIA. Doyle's slyly humorous tone makes the story feel like a caper at times as he revels in Duffy's unorthodox approach to his work, the Troubles, and justice, and makes the listener hope that the D.I.'s decision to pension off will be reversed. *L.W.S.*

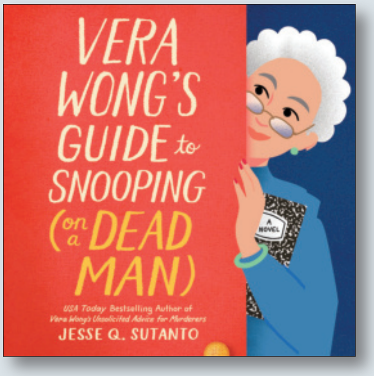
Blackstone Audio 10 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781504780872 $20.95
(also CD, MP3)

THE LAST DAYS OF KIRA MULLAN
Nicci French
Read by Sophie Roberts

When Nancy's life implodes after a psychotic break, trouble seems to follow her: A neighbor in her new apartment building commits suicide. Sophie Roberts's gripping narration brings every layer of this psychological thriller to life. As Nancy begins to hear strange voices in her new flat, Roberts keeps listeners questioning what's going on. She captures Nancy's initial fragile hope, growing paranoia, and, then, her unraveling reality. All the characters' reactions—from Nancy's partner's quiet patience to her neighbors' skepticism and male policemen's indifference—add depth to the mystery. Is Nancy's anxiety just paranoia, or is something truly sinister going on? Detective Maud O'Connor's quiet determination and willingness to confront sexism in the investigation could lead to a big breakthrough. For fans of thrillers, this is a must-listen. *M.R.*

Harper Audio 11.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063298415 $27.99

VERA WONG'S GUIDE TO SNOOPING (ON A DEAD MAN): Vera Wong, Book 2
Jesse Q. Sutanto
Read by Eunice Wong


VERA WONG'S GUIDE to SNOOPING (on a DEAD MAN)
A NOVEL
USA Today Bestselling Author of Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderers
JESSE Q. SUTANTO

Vera Wong is back, bringing with her characters from Sutanto's previous audiobook, along with a host of new suspects and friends. Narrator Eunice Wong turns in another stellar performance, ensuring that this second audiobook featuring the 60-year-old Chinese mother and self-styled super sleuth is just as entertaining and thought-provoking as the first. This time, Vera gets herself involved with the seamy underside of social media influencers while trying to solve what police think is a suicide. Of course, Vera knows better, and, of course, trouble ensues. Eunice Wong's attention to pitch and pacing perfectly re-creates the voices of Vera's original community while fashioning a new set of personalities, young and old, for this darker second "case" in a new series. *S.G.*

Penguin Audio 10.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217063864 $22.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217063871 $95.00

Narrator Eunice Wong turns in another stellar performance.

CLOSE YOUR EYES AND COUNT TO 10
Lisa Unger
Read by Vivienne Leheny

Vivienne Leheny's lively narration perfectly suits this high-stakes thriller. Single mother Adele, desperate for money, joins an extreme game of hide-and-seek at an abandoned island resort hosted by Maverick Dillan, an adventurer who is her son's favorite social media personality. Amid warnings from locals and a raging storm, prize money becomes the least of the contestants' worries. Lines begin to blur between the intentional drama created by Maverick's crew and the eerie, remote setting for the game. Leheny's performance maintains listener interest throughout the story's slow start. Her range is showcased as she transitions among the polite, clipped tones of adults, shouting teens, and nervous contestants who shift from confident on-camera personas to shaky-voiced apprehension. *A.L.C.*

Harlequin Audio 11.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781488233579 $27.99

THE BUSINESS TRIP

Jessie Garcia
Read by Andrew Eiden,
Dylan Reilly Fitzpatrick,
Fred Berman, Gail Shalan,
Hillary Huber, Jennifer Pickens,
John Pirhalla, Kimberly M. Wetherell,
Kirby Heyborne, Tim Campbell

The ensemble of narrators adds great depth to this audiobook, allowing listeners to immerse themselves in the richness of well-defined characters. In Garcia's debut thriller, the listening experience is memorable because each of the narrators is superb. There is Hillary Huber as Stephanie, who is presumably murdered on a business trip. There is Jennifer Pickens as Jasmine, the expertly portrayed woman who is desperate to have what she believes everyone else has. And there is Tim Campbell, who perfectly portrays the smarmy Trent McCarthy, the presumed murderer of Stephanie and Jasmine. All, of course, is not as it seems, and the mystery deepens with each passing moment. The result is a riveting audiobook that will keep listeners hooked from start to surprising finish. *D.J.S.*

Macmillan Audio 9 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250379054 $19.99 (also CD)
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250410801 $74.99

INTO THE FALL

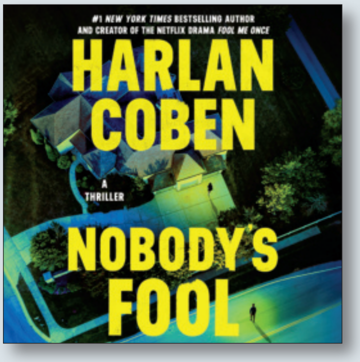
Tamara L. Miller
Read by Hillary Huber

Hillary Huber delivers another great audio performance voicing this adventurous mystery set in the glacier-carved wilderness of the Canadian Shield. Huber skillfully embodies the distraught confusion of Sarah Anderson when her husband inexplicably disappears on a backcountry canoe trip. She also reflects Sarah's anger and feelings of betrayal when she discovers her husband appears to have been living a secret double life. Huber nails the distinct subtlety of an Eastern Canadian accent, which is important for an audiobook so heavily rooted in the Canadian landscape. Both the audiobook's setting and plot are ominous and intriguing, and Huber's nuanced performance augments their invocations of beauty and terror. *J.T.*

Brilliance Audio 8.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781511316163 $35.99

NOBODY'S FOOL

Harlan Coben
Read by Vikas Adam


#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR AND CREATOR OF THE NETFLIX DRAMA FOOL ME ONCE
HARLAN COBEN
A THRILLER
NOBODY'S FOOL

Vikas Adam masterfully draws listeners into this nonstop thriller featuring disgraced former NYPD detective Sami Kierce. The story begins with a secret from more than 20 years earlier, when Sami, fresh from college, backpacked through Europe and had a brief romance with a beautiful American woman. Fast-forward to the present: Twists and turns come quickly as Sami investigates the disappearance of a wealthy young woman and threats to his family. Adam expertly voices a wide range of characters, keeping listeners engaged. Sami is sharp but self-sabotaging, traits that make him both frustrating and endearing. Listeners may find themselves alternately rooting for him and shouting warnings. Adam perfectly matches Harlan Coben's emotional beats, enhancing every tense moment in this roller-coaster thriller. A gripping, expertly narrated listen. *E.Q.*

Hachette Audio 11.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668648186 $27.99

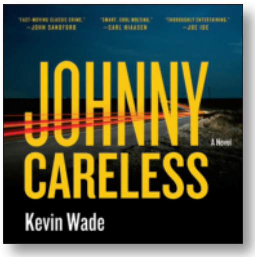
A gripping, expertly narrated listen.

LETHAL PREY

John Sandford
Read by Robert Petkoff

Narrator Robert Petkoff teams up with author John Sandford for another exhilarating romp featuring U.S. Marshal Lucas Davenport and Bureau of Criminal Apprehension agent-turned-thriller-writer Virgil Flowers. Assigned to solve a twenty-year-old crime, they're forced to collaborate with true-crime bloggers to crowdsource clues. Petkoff masterfully differentiates the diverse male characters—heroes and villains alike—and finds credible voices for the women. His performance enhances the tension and humor that define the series. The bloggers' involvement adds a fresh contemporary angle to the investigation. While listeners know the culprit's identity early on, the narrative's twists keep them fully engaged as Davenport and Flowers chase every lead. Petkoff's skillful narration makes this a worthy addition to the Prey series, keeping fans entertained from start to finish. *E.Q.*

Penguin Audio 11.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217019649 $22.50



JOHNNY CARELESS

Kevin Wade
Read by John Pirhalla

As John Pirhalla demonstrates, the trick to narrating this Long Island-based mystery is to use the "Lawn Guyland" accent sparingly, and primarily for local color—for example, when a diner waitress wisecracks to a contentious customer. Pirhalla, an experienced architect of suspense, gives this audiobook considerable zing. Kevin Wade's lean writing style, low-key humor, snappy dialogue, shifting point of view, and depiction of moral ambiguity will invite comparisons to Robert Parker, Elmore Leonard, and Don Winslow. Even though this whodunit involves familiar tropes—the murder victim is a childhood friend of the investigating cop, the vic's ex-wife is the cop's former crush, and the vic's wealthy family has secrets—they're energized by fresh writing and a deft narration. *R.W.S.*

Macmillan Audio 7 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250383891 $19.99
Macmillan Audio
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250410740 $64.99

The Many Faces of Sherlock Holmes

By Aurelia C. Scott

Faced with the ups and downs of today's uncertain world, I've been teleporting myself back into the 19th century. There I delight in the company of Charlotte, Enola, Mary, and Sherlock—all mystery adaptations of the Holmes cannon that divert, entertain, and fortify me. Come join in the fun. Do hurry, for the game is afoot!

As Edgar Award-winning Laurie R. King's Holmes/Russell books reveal, after 221B Baker Street, Holmes met and married an extraordinary young woman named Mary Russell. With 18 books thus far, listeners can revel at length in their adventurous partnership. Narrator Jenny Sterlin's many Earphones Awards began with the couple's accidental meeting on the Sussex Downs in the oh-so-good Book 1, *The Beekeeper's Apprentice*. Sterlin shared an Earphones Award with co-narrator Susan Lyons in one of my favorites, Book 14, *The Murder of Mary Russell*, about housekeeper Mrs. Hudson's shocking past. The newest book, *The Lantern's Dance*, finds Russell and Holmes both evading and pursuing danger in the French countryside. Amy Scanlon, who has taken over from Sterlin, captivates with her own Earphones Award performance. And there's more! Book 19, *The Knave of Diamonds*, will be published on June 10, narrated by Amy Scanlon, Robert Ian Mackenzie, and Jefferson Mays.

Nancy Springer's celebrated young adult series about Enola Holmes, Sherlock's independent kid sister, has also been voiced by two excellent narrators (and gotten a Netflix adaptation as well). The late Katherine Kellgren, an *AudioFile* Golden Voice, got Enola's escapades off to a terrific start in *The Case of the Missing Marquess*, in which Enola must discover why her mother has disappeared. Kellgren's Enola, spirited, aristocratic, and sometimes wistful, touches the heart while entertaining. Tamaryn Payne, who became the series narrator with Book 7, *Enola Holmes and the Black Barouch*, keeps those qualities and adds her own facility with regional accents. In Book 9, *Enola Holmes and the Elegant Escapade*, our heroine must rescue Lady Cecily Alastair from her family and from London's mean streets. Payne's appreciation of Enola's wit and enthusiastic personality adds to the listening pleasure.

The full-cast productions of Charles Kindinger's audio-only reimagining of Holmes and his nemesis Moriarty are full of vibrant acting and atmospheric sound effects—all guaranteed to spirit you far away. *Moriarty: The Devil's Game*, presented as a 10-episode podcast, sets the scene. Moriarty, a misunderstood genius who says that he's been framed for murder, breaks out of jail with his Scottish comrade. Played by Dominic Monaghan and Billy Boyd, they're quickly in conflict with Holmes and Watson, played by Phil LaMarr and Adam Godley. Book 2, *Moriarty: The Silent Order*, brings back the stellar cast and adds the inimitable Dame Helen Mirren as master criminal Lady Milverton. Moriarty and Holmes actually join forces this time as they face Lady M. Much breathless excitement ensues. May it long continue.

> *I want to celebrate Golden Voice narrator Kate Reading's stellar performance of Sherry Thomas's Lady Sherlock novels. I am so addicted to them that I have started to listen all over again.*

Finally, I want to celebrate Golden Voice narrator Kate Reading's stellar performance of Sherry Thomas's Lady Sherlock novels. I am so addicted to them that I have started to listen all over again. Reading won an Earphones Award for Book 1, *A Study in Scarlet Women*, which set up Thomas's clever premise—namely that Sherlock, an ailing and reclusive genius detective and brother of Charlotte Holmes, is actually the invention of brilliant Charlotte, who solves crimes while purportedly acting for him. Reading has won numerous Earphones Awards for her crisp and sensitive delivery of Thomas's excellent writing, as well as her nuanced portrayals of recurring characters, including Mrs. Watson, a retired courtesan and Charlotte's benefactress; Charlotte's love-interest, Lord Ingram; Scotland Yard Inspector Treadles; and Charlotte's impossible parents. In the most recent book, *A Ruse of Shadows*, we find Charlotte herself suspected of murder. As our reviewer said, "Disguises are plentiful, mistaken identity is common, and dastardly villains abound." Oh, such fun. I recommend that you begin with Book 1 and savor the ensuing deliciousness.

All right now, onward into these new versions of the past. Here's to encountering each other soon in foggy London Town. ■

audible ORIGINAL
MORIARTY
TWO DEAD BODIES. ONE UNFORGETTABLE HERO.
DEATH CLOUD
ANDREW LANE
The Lady Sherlock Series
A Ruse of Shadows
NETFLIX
ENOLA HOLMES AND THE ELEGANT ESCAPADE
NANCY SPRINGER
READ BY TAMARYN PAYNE
audible ORIGINAL
MORIARTY
ONLY FROM audible
LONDON SOCIETY TAKES ITS PROBLEMS TO Sherlock Holmes. EVERYONE ELSE GOES TO
ARROWOOD
MICK FI
"Arrowood's flamboyant Victorian world...
LAURIE R. KING
The Lantern's Dance
Narrated by Amy Scanlon
rb media
SHERRY THOMAS
Read by Kate Reading
A Study in Scarlet Women
First in the Lady Sherlock Series
ENOLA HOLMES
NARRATED BY KATHERINE KELLGREN
LAURIE R. KING
Knave of Diamonds
Narrated by Amy Scanlon, Jefferson Mays, and Steven Crossley
KAREEM ABDUL-JABBAR and ANNA WATERHOUSE
A NOVEL
MYCROFT HOLMES

More Listening

THE BEEKEEPER'S APPRENTICE:
Mary Russell, Book 1
Laurie R. King, read by Jenny Sterlin

Recorded Books Unabridged
Trade Ed.: CD, MP3, DD

THE MURDER OF MARY RUSSELL:
Mary Russell, Book 14
Laurie R. King, read by Jenny Sterlin, Susan Lyons

Recorded Books Unabridged
Trade Ed.: CD, MP3, DD

THE LANTERN'S DANCE:
Mary Russell, Book 18
Laurie R. King, read by Amy Scanlon

Recorded Books Unabridged
Library Ed.: CD, MP3, DD

KNAVE OF DIAMONDS:
Mary Russell, Book 19
Laurie R. King, read by Amy Scanlon, Robert Ian Mackenzie, Jefferson Mays

Recorded Books Unabridged
Library Ed.: CD, MP3, DD

THE CASE OF THE MISSING MARQUESS:
Enola Holmes, Book 1
Nancy Springer, read by Katherine Kellgren

Recorded Books Unabridged Ages 12+
Library Ed.: CD, MP3, DD

ENOLA HOLMES AND THE BLACK BAROUCH:
Enola Holmes, Book 7
Nancy Springer, read by Tamaryn Payne, Christopher Bonwell

Macmillan Audio Unabridged Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: DD

ENOLA HOLMES AND THE ELEGANT ESCAPADE:
Enola Holmes, Book 9
Nancy Springer, read by Tamaryn Payne

Macmillan Audio Unabridged Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: DD
Library Ed.: DD

MORIARTY: THE DEVIL'S GAME
Charles Kindinger, read by Dominic Monaghan, Billy Boyd, Phil LaMarr, Lindsay Whisler, Adam Godley, and a Full Cast

Audible, Inc. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

MORIARTY: THE SILENT ORDER
Charles Kindinger, read by Helen Mirren, Dominic Monaghan, Phil LaMarr, and a Full Cast

Audible, Inc. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

DEATH CLOUD
Andrew Lane, read by Daniel Weyman

Macmillan Audio Unabridged Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: DD

A STUDY IN SCARLET WOMEN:
Lady Sherlock, Book 1
Sherry Thomas, read by Kate Reading

Penguin Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD

A RUSE OF SHADOWS:
LAdy Sherlock, Book 8
Sherry Thomas, read by Kate Reading

Penguin Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD

ARROWOOD
Mick Finlay, read by Malk Williams

Harlequin Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

MYCROFT HOLMES
Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Anna Waterhouse, read by Damian Lynch

Audible, Inc. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

PODCAST EPISODE

Listen to an audio review at audiofilemagazine.com/podcast

READING THE WAVES: A Memoir
Lidia Yuknavitch
Read by Lidia Yuknavitch

In this gorgeous memoir, bestselling American author Lidia Yuknavitch meanders through her life with the grace of moving water. Her narration, too, mimics the rhythmic lyricism of water. Her voice gently rises and falls like ocean waves as she recounts her complicated relationships with her ex-husband and mother, along with the ways the grief she carries from their deaths reverberates throughout her life. She writes about artistic practice, violence against women, motherhood, messy family legacies, the landscapes of Texas and Oregon, and so much more. Her voice is deep, gentle, and full of emotion; she narrates calmly but with a curiosity about the patterns in her own life and how they relate to the wider world that is catching. A moving performance by a thoughtful and generous writer. *L.S.*

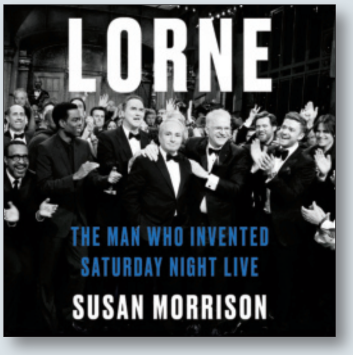
Penguin Audio 7 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593951149 $17.50
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593951156 $76.00

GOOD SOIL: The Education of an Accidental Farmhand
Jeff Chu
Read by Jeff Chu

Jeff Chu, an ordained minister in the Reformed Church in America, narrates the story of his experiences at Princeton Theological Seminary, also known as its "Farminary." Working the land and forming connections with strangers there informed his intellectual and spiritual lives. A journalist prior to seminary, Chu still writes, and both journalist and preacher are evident in his delivery of this engaging, hopeful, moving, and unhurried production. Chu, a gay, married man, states that we must know our own stories before we can help others learn theirs. His examination of his relationship with his conservative Chinese parents may lend support to others who are navigating difficult family terrain. Chu's thoughtful, poignant memoir is accompanied by an excellent recipe for fried rice. *S.G.*

Random House Audio 9.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217020492 $22.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217020508 $66.50

LORNE: The Man Who Invented Saturday Night Live
Susan Morrison
Read by Kristen DiMercurio, Susan Morrison



Hot on the heels of the 50th anniversary of "Saturday Night Live," Susan Morrison's tell-all biography of SNL creator Lorne Michaels helps satisfy fans' need for behind-the-scenes info about the beloved show. Narrator Kristen DiMercurio is as reserved as Michaels himself in her delivery. The audiobook traces Michaels's humble beginnings in Toronto and his bumpy rise to superstardom as the SNL creator and tough-minded producer. Who doesn't want to hear about the battles between staff writers and the stars? Or the dirt on who was sleeping with whom? (Answer: pretty much everyone with everyone except Jane Curtain.) And, of course, what was (insert cast member name here) really like? The audiobook is more than 22 hours long, but listeners will still want to hear more. *M.S.*

Random House Audio 23 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593608777 $30.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593608784 $95.00

Helps satisfy fans' need for behind-the-scenes info about the beloved show.

THREE WILD DOGS (AND THE TRUTH): A Memoir
Markus Zusak
Read by Markus Zusak

The author of the international bestseller *The Book Thief*, Markus Zusak, intertwines his memoir with the entertaining story of how his family adopted three rescue dogs and how they brought both chaos and joy to his life. Zusak introduces listeners to Reuben, Archer, and Frosty in his well-known beautiful narrative style, establishing them as memorable characters. Charming and amusing, he speaks of their impactful antics and the love that came into his life because of them. He also shares the emotions associated with more difficult memories and loss. Those who listen to this relatable audiobook will enjoy hearing Zusak's relaxing tone as he speaks of his family, his writing, and his devoted connection with his dogs. *D.Z.*

Harper Audio 5.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063426108 $27.99

SOURCE CODE: My Beginnings
Bill Gates
Read by Wil Wheaton, Bill Gates

While Wil Wheaton is the principal narrator of this audiobook, Microsoft founder and philanthropist Bill Gates offers a workmanlike delivery of his preface and epilogue. There's something just a bit banal yet cheerful and enthusiastic about Wheaton's performance. His vocal impressions are especially off-putting when he recounts President John F. Kennedy's early 1960s speech on America's technology imperatives. Regarding the seemingly routine process of maturing, it's all here: the "kitchen cabinet" of nerds in Gates's childhood and adolescence, as well as details of those involved in the founding of Micro-Soft, as it was initially named. Listeners who want to hear more about how Gates ultimately became such a creative, generous, and philanthropic icon can look forward to the next two installments in his planned trilogy. *W.A.G.*

Random House Audio 11.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593914748 $22.50
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593914755 $95.00

BROOKE SHIELDS IS NOT ALLOWED TO GET OLD: Thoughts on Aging as a Woman

Brooke Shields, Rachel Bertsche [Contributor]
Read by Brooke Shields

In her latest memoir, the now 59-year-old actor Brooke Shields candidly narrates her experiences entering middle age, illuminating both her personal experience and research into topics like healthcare, sex, and parenthood. Shields's candid stories—like the ones about her exercise-induced femur break, her journey parenting adult children, and more—are narrated with wry humor and humility and are made all the more powerful by hearing them in Shields's clear, husky voice. The overarching themes of empowerment and comfort in one's own skin even if it is no longer wrinkle free are a perfect listen for those who enjoy celebrity-narrated memoirs. *B.A.G.*

Macmillan Audio 9 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250354082 $19.99 (also CD)

SAVING FIVE: A Memoir of Hope

Amanda Nguyen
Read by Sura Siu, Amanda Nguyen

Sura Siu's narration brings depth and sensitivity to Amanda Nguyen's powerful memoir about surviving sexual assault when she was in college. Siu's measured, compassionate delivery honors Nguyen's story, which balances the raw emotion of trauma with the strength of survival. Siu's voice captures the shifting tones of the narrative—quiet pain, determined resolve, and moments of triumph—without sounding overdone. She transitions seamlessly between the deeply personal reflections and the urgent calls for justice, maintaining a steady rhythm that keeps listeners engaged. Her ability to embody Nguyen's younger selves adds an extra layer of nuance, making their emotional journeys distinct yet connected. Siu's performance elevates the memoir, offering an intimate and compelling listening experience that does justice to Nguyen's inspiring fight for change. *M.R.*

Macmillan Audio 6 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250386724 $19.99
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250417466 $59.99

FEARLESS AND FREE: A Memoir

Josephine Baker, Ijeoma Oluo [Fore.],
Anam Zafar, Sophie R. Lewis [Trans.]
Read by Ijeoma Oluo, Jade Wheeler,
Quentin Bruno

THE ARTIST IN HER OWN WORDS
FEARLESS AND FREE
A Memoir
JOSEPHINE BAKER
IJEOMA OLUO

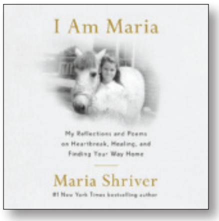
Performing this fascinating memoir, published originally in French in 1929, Belgian actor Jade Wheeler captures the charm and depth of the American singer Josephine Baker, who lived in the U.S. and France. Wheeler performs with the spunk you'd expect from Baker, who enthralled audiences with her seductive personality and talent. In France, she enjoyed an unfiltered, irreverent way of living that was not possible for Black entertainers in the segregated U.S. Baker had a humanitarian streak, too, spying for the French Resistance in WWII, adopting multicultural children to promote integration, and later fighting for civil rights in America. Bookended by Quentin Bruno's reverent delivery of the introduction and afterword, Wheeler's nuanced performance embraces all the pathos, complexity, and joy in this exceptional memoir. *T.W.*

Penguin Audio 8.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217019953 $22.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217019960 $76.00

Jade Wheeler captures the charm and depth of the American singer.

I AM MARIA

Maria Shriver
Read by Maria Shriver



Author, broadcast journalist, and JFK's niece, Maria Shriver also served as California's first lady. Here she offers a heartfelt "sort of memoir," which is supplemented by her personal, occasionally cryptic, poetry. Shriver's performance is polished, varied in pace and tone, easy on the ears, and moving. Poems reflect a life of major accomplishments and wealth advantages but riddled with trauma. The overall theme of her life has been the Kennedy/Shriver mantra: "To whom much is given, much is expected." Shriver asks the listener, as well as herself, to make peace with the highs and lows of life, to be just exactly who you are, and to do so using poetry—not necessarily with couplet, rhyme, or haiku—simply words that give emotion to the feelings. *W.A.G.*

Penguin Audio 5.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217082452 $20.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217082469 $85.50

RAISING HARE: A Memoir

Chloe Dalton
Read by Louise Brealey

Louise Brealey's captivating narration of Dalton's memoir is simply delightful. Far away from the fast pace and crowds of her life before the pandemic, Dalton finds what she believes is an abandoned leveret, a baby hare, in the English countryside. With the deepest respect for wildlife, Dalton supplies what this leveret needs to survive in exchange for the gift of witnessing something magical. Exhaustive research, keen observation, and trial and error give Dalton a special entry into the lives of wild hares. Brealey's narration is a contemplation of Dalton's quiet but conscientious honoring of the often overlooked wild hare. *L.J.C.A.*

Random House Audio 6.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217018734 $17.50
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217018741 $57.00

PROPAGANDA GIRLS: The Secret War of the Women in the OSS

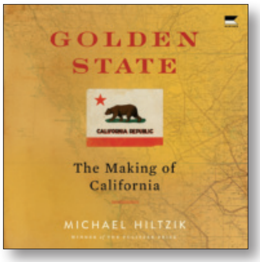
Lisa Rogak
Read by Samara Naeymi

Samara Naeymi delivers the untold story of four courageous women who played a vital part in winning WWII. Although they came from diverse backgrounds—Hawaii, Czechoslovakia, Tokyo, and Germany— these women were all members of the OSS, the U.S. intelligence agency that was the forerunner of the CIA. They were responsible for producing varied pieces of propaganda designed to reduce the morale of Axis soldiers, making them easier to defeat. Naeymi's mesmerizing narration takes listeners into the heart-stopping intrigue and action of nations at war and into the souls of women with cool demeanors and spines of steel. Naeymi highlights the characteristics of the principal characters while also focusing on their individual professional skills, such as foreign language prowess or reporting. *L.M.G.*

Macmillan Audio 6 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781250392244 $19.99

GOLDEN STATE: The Making of California

Michael Hiltzik
Read by Bob Souer



Bob Souer is a strong, energetic narrator who brings character and clarity to this excellent history of America's most colorful and dynamic state. Equally important, Souer maintains the author's reportorial balance and unmistakable enthusiasm for his subject. Arranged chronologically with each chapter devoted to a different era or feature of California's history, this is the kind of audiobook that can be listened to in strict order, or selectively by topic. The Gold Rush and the 1851 Vigilante cleanup of San Francisco are the most dramatic episodes, followed by the shabby history of the South Pacific Railroad and the Los Angeles water system. Every chapter, rich in detail and insight and masterfully narrated, is a fascinating listening experience. *D.A.W.*

Harper Audio 14.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063428997 $27.99

THE MAVERICK'S MUSEUM: Albert Barnes and His American Dream

Blake Gopnik
Read by Jeremy Arthur

Jeremy Arthur's engaging narration befits the life story of Dr. Albert C. Barnes (1872-1951), an early collector of modern art and champion of minority art. Raised in a working-class environment, Barnes made his fortune in pharmaceuticals. He proceeded to use his wealth to study art, eventually building an extensive collection that became the Barnes Foundation. His friendship with educational reformer John Dewey developed into a lifelong mission to educate the public by making the collection accessible to everyone. It continues today. Arthur's expressive delivery never wavers as he keeps to a brisk pace, recounting Barnes's cantankerous personality and bullying tendencies, used to his advantage as he steamrolled over European art dealers and American academics. An enlightening audio experience. *J.E.S.*

Harper Audio 9.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063284067 $25.19

RED SCARE: Blacklists, McCarthyism, and the Making of Modern America

Clay Risen
Read by Kevin R. Free

RED
READ BY KEVIN R. FREE
SCARE
BLACKLISTS, McCARTHYISM, AND THE MAKING OF MODERN AMERICA
CLAY RISEN

Kevin R. Free narrates this fact-filled, occasionally opinionated, history of the post-WWII period when the U.S. targeted communists, trade unionists, homosexuals, progressives, and Soviet sympathizers for removal from civic life. Prodded by influential men like FBI head J. Edgar Hoover and Senator Joseph McCarthy, the government conducted intense surveillance. The House Un-American Activities Committee encouraged neighbors and colleagues to inform on each other and held hearings, often rife with overblown accusations and innuendo. Blacklists, book purges, and firings became commonplace. Free occasionally mimics the speech of well-known figures. Mostly, however, his conversational delivery is like that of a friend who is recounting a national crisis. The author doesn't draw comparisons with our current era—but listeners may. *L.T.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 15.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781797191386 $29.99

> *Free's conversational delivery is like that of a friend who is recounting a national crisis.*

KENT STATE: An American Tragedy

Brian VanDeMark
Read by Daniel Henning

Narrator Daniel Henning takes on this detailed account of the shooting by National Guardsmen of students who were protesting the Vietnam War at Kent State University in 1970. Presented as a timeline with context but few digressions, it recounts the events from all sides: the National Guard's, politicians', Kent State administrators', students', parents', and local residents'. Henning uses an unemotional tone for recounting events and delivers the interviews, news accounts, and court hearings in a higher pitch. He captures the heightened reactions to protests, shootings, and other civil unrest that eventually left four students dead and nine permanently injured in Ohio. Fifty-five years later, this fatal clash between Vietnam War protesters and the National Guard still sparks emotions, visceral reactions, and sorrow. *M.B.K.*

HighBridge Audio 13 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781696616232 $24.99

OLIVER CROMWELL: Commander in Chief

Ronald Hutton
Read by Nigel Patterson

This second installment brings British historian Ronald Hutton's magisterial biography of Oliver Cromwell up to 30 hours of listening time. It's a daunting undertaking for most listeners—but still short of Cromwell's term as Lord Protector of Britain (1653-58). Even so, there is much to recommend here. Narrator Nigel Patterson's fine enunciation is silken to the ear, bringing clarity and purpose to a narrative that is itself richly detailed and gracefully composed. Rich, too, are the issues and parallels that Cromwell's divided era poses—that time of division and civil war, legislative disarray, and swift social change. Not every listener may want to venture as far into this complex seventeenth-century tangle, but the rewards and satisfactions accrue with every hour. *D.A.W.*

Tantor Media 15.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798855580204 $29.99

THE FRANKLIN STOVE: An Unintended American Revolution

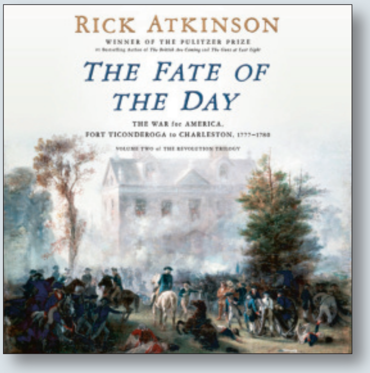
Joyce E. Chaplin
Read by Cynthia Farrell

Narrator Cynthia Farrell has demonstrated her versatility over a wide range of subjects and genres. She—like her present topic—embraces material but doesn't intrude, and is thrifty, ingenious, and reliable. The Franklin stove, today a relic of history, was in its time a revolution in domestic life, and its story provides an unexpectedly rich and compelling perspective on ecology, population, and industrialization at their most fundamental levels. Added too is the role and personality of Benjamin Franklin himself, best known as a senior statesman, but here in his creative prime, an emerging world figure and the first American genius. This is a narrative with many rewards and surprises, stimulating to the mind and pleasing to the ear. *D.A.W.*

Brilliance Audio 14.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781511349307 $42.99

THE FATE OF THE DAY: The War for America, Fort Ticonderoga to Charleston, 1777-1780

Rick Atkinson
Read by Grover Gardner, Rick Atkinson


RICK ATKINSON
WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE
THE FATE OF THE DAY
THE WAR for AMERICA,
FORT TICONDEROGA to CHARLESTON, 1777–1780
VOLUME TWO of THE REVOLUTION TRILOGY

Author and narrator are both at their best here. This second installment brings Atkinson's monumental history of the Revolutionary War to nearly 60 hours, with the conclusion still to come. It's an investment timely and richly rewarded. Grover Gardner isn't the most melodic of narrators, but he is steady, consistent, and subtly expressive, the very qualities needed for serious listening. Few accounts of the great struggle for independence are so fully and vividly recounted, or so penetrating. Washington is the dominating figure, always admirable, but on a human scale, with his share of shortcomings and pretensions. Lafayette, Arnold, even John Hancock—the dusty names step out of the shadows and down from their pedestals. Golden Voice Gardner's flawless delivery marks this as one of the year's hallmark listening experiences. *D.A.W.*

Random House Audio 32.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217066964 $36.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217066971 $95.00

Author and narrator are both at their best here.

TAKING MANHATTAN: The Extraordinary Events That Created New York and Shaped America

Russell Shorto
Read by Russell Shorto

Russell Shorto is an author who can narrate his audiobooks as effectively as any professional. In voice, Shorto is personable, assured, and exact—much like his narratives. This history of the English acquisition of Dutch New Amsterdam follows Shorto's bestselling *Island at the Center of the World*, which covered the Dutch settlement of Manhattan. Once again, Shorto emphasizes political and military history, as well as the broad demographic of people who, from the first, have made New York a world center. Shorto is a steady, undramatic narrator. But this is not a high-action history. The Dutch gave up the settlement without a shot fired but preserved their property, trade system, and self-governance. The outcome is a lesson in wise diplomacy. *D.A.W.*

Recorded Books 11.5 hrs. Unabridged
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798895940624 $29.99
(also CD, MP3)

THE LAST MANAGER: How Earl Weaver Tricked, Tormented, and Reinvented Baseball

John W. Miller
Read by Johnny Heller

Earl Weaver, the legendary manager of MLB's Baltimore Orioles for 17 seasons, was known for his on-field theatrics as much as his strategy. Johnny Heller's gravelly voice, conversational tone, and high energy do a good job of conveying Weaver's character. Heller is mostly comfortable with the baseball jargon and stats—always a potential pitfall for narrators—and even with the inevitable profanity for which the Earl of Baltimore was infamous, especially when chewing out umpires. This biography draws heavily on interviews with Weaver's contemporaries, and these are narrated without adornment. A story emerges about a seemingly old-school manager whose style foreshadowed the way the game is played today. *D.B.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 8.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781797193786 $24.99

Author Eve L. Ewing

ORIGINAL SINS: The (Mis)education of Black and Native Children and the Construction of American Racism

Eve L. Ewing
Read by Robin Miles, Eve L. Ewing

ORIGINAL SINS
The (Mis)education of Black and Native Children and the Construction of American Racism
EVE L. EWING

Kudos to the author, publisher, and narrator of this audiobook. Author Ewing delivers her introduction, which sets up the arguments. She then turns the body of the text over to Golden Voice narrator Robin Miles. Miles is a gifted performer whose tone, tempo, and cadence enhance the dark truths of this provocative work on the failure of our educational system. Ewing, who is a scholar and poet, indicts American schools as historically rigged against Black and Native American students. She defines in well-supported detail the pillars of racism that have tainted attitudes towards both groups: the belief that they are intellectually inferior and lack discipline, along with economic subjugation. Packed with telltale episodes, this work provides sociological context. A must-listen for parents and politicians. *A.D.M.*

Random House Audio 12.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593908242 $24.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593908259 $95.00

> *Miles's tone, tempo, and cadence enhance the dark truths of this provocative work.*

1919
POEMS
EVE
ELECTRIC ARCHES
NG
EVE L. EWING
GHOSTS IN THE SCHOOLYARD
Racism and School Closings on Chicago's South Side
READ BY LISA R
EVE L. EWING
MAYA AND THE ROBOT
Christine Almeda

More Listening

1919
Eve L. Ewing, read by Eve L. Ewing
Tantor Media Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

ELECTRIC ARCHES
Eve L. Ewing, read by Eve L. Ewing
Haymarket Books Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

GHOSTS IN THE SCHOOLYARD: Racism and School Closings in Chicago's South Side
Eve L. Ewing, read by Lisa Reneé Pitts
Tantor Media Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

MAYA AND THE ROBOT
Eve L. Ewing, read by Bahni Turpin
Listening Library Unabridged Ages 8+
Trade Ed. DD
Library Ed.: DD

Photo by Jaclyn Rivas

BOOSTER SHOTS: The Urgent Lessons of Measles and the Uncertain Future of Children's Health

Adam Ratner
Read by Adam Ratner

In a conversational but serious manner, pediatrician and infectious disease specialist Adam Ratner explains that effective measles vaccines have existed for more than 60 years. Sadly, the very success of this technology has resulted in a kind of collective amnesia about the risks of measles. Ratner doesn't sound like he's going to give up his medical career to narrate audiobooks, but he does an entertaining and persuasive job of making his case for science-based public health and the unequal effects of poverty on the outcomes of infectious disease outbreaks. He expresses frustration at the lingering misleading and even outright false claims that linked MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) with autism at the same time that he recognizes the importance of being respectful to vaccine-hesitant parents. *A.B.*

Penguin Audio 7.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade: ISBN 9798217011797 $20.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9798217011803 $76.00

HOMESTAND: Small Town Baseball and the Fight for the Soul of America

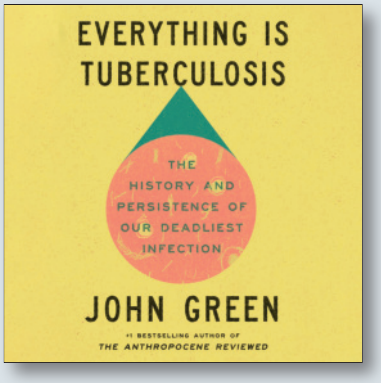
Will Bardenwerper
Read by Dan Bittner

Dan Bittner's narration pairs nostalgia for American baseball with an incisive examination of the game today. Throughout the summer season of 2022, listeners follow the fortunes of a town whose MLB affiliation was removed in 2020 as part of a 25% downsizing of minor league baseball. In an effort to retain local baseball in Batavia, New York, new owners purchased the Batavia Muckdogs and filled its roster with college athletes. Bittner's congenial voice connects the author with fellow military veterans, diehard fans, and multigenerational supporters rallying around their team. He infuses his performance with warmth and an affinity for the sport while simultaneously leveling frank assessments of MLB's business model and data-driven play. This engrossing production is a must-listen for sports fans. *J.R.T.*

Random House Audio 10.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9798217018673 $20.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: ISBN 9798217018680 $76.00

EVERYTHING IS TUBERCULOSIS: The History and Persistence of Our Deadliest Infection

John Green
Read by John Green


EVERYTHING IS TUBERCULOSIS
THE HISTORY AND PERSISTENCE OF OUR DEADLIEST INFECTION
JOHN GREEN
#1 BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE ANTHROPOCENE REVIEWED

On a visit to Lakka Government Hospital in Sierra Leone, bestselling author John Green met Henry, a charismatic patient who looks much younger than his age due to the ravages of a tuberculosis infection on his body. They established a friendship, and Green's interest in the disease grew, leading him to become a supporter of Partners in Health and an advocate for reducing disparities in treatment. With a down-to-earth narration, Green presents his own account of visiting with afflicted patients and learning about the challenges they face, particularly in poorer countries. He describes the history of tuberculosis and its treatments, barriers to treatment, and the development of drug-resistant variants. Green cites the importance of reducing mortality worldwide from this disease. *S.E.G.*

Listening Library 5.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9798217082391 $15.00

> *Green presents his account of visiting with afflicted patients.*

CLOSE TO HOME: The Wonders of Nature Just Outside Your Door

Thor Hanson
Read by Stacy Carolan

Biologist Thor Hanson describes how during the Covid pandemic he attuned his senses to the wildlife right in his backyard. Narrator Stacy Carolan strikes a curious tone as he narrates the author's explorations of nature in Kansas City. Carolan's delivery is laid-back yet quickly paced as he presents the author's observations on the daily life that was going on all around him, including the activities of creatures that usually go unnoticed, such as birds, frogs, butterflies, wasps, and pollinators. In particular, Hanson discusses observing wildlife at night and introducing children to the wonders of their local environment. He also weaves in references to works of other nature chroniclers and the importance of biodiversity and restoration. *S.E.G.*

Hachette Audio 5.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781668647981 $18.99

NEW PRIZE FOR THESE EYES: The Rise of America's Second Civil Rights Movement

Juan Williams
Read by Juan Williams

Journalist and television personality Juan Williams's audiobook arrives four decades after his first book, *Eyes on the Prize* (1987), which covered the mid-twentieth-century Civil Rights movement. This work argues that Barack Obama's presidency and the development of the social media age reflect the emergence of a second civil rights movement. Fueled in part by police killings of Black men and women and Obama's epoch-making political success, this movement arises with Internet speed while battling white nationalism and expanded racism—against Asians and Jews, as well as Black people. Williams, who has a lot of broadcast experience on radio as well as television, narrates clearly and with conviction. His audiobook ends with an examination of the gains of the Biden administration, which now seem short-lived. *A.D.M.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 9.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781797185675 $25.99

EQUALITY: What it Means and Why it Matters

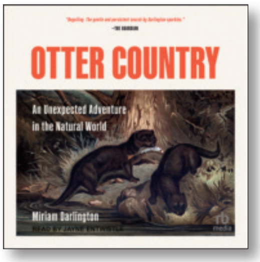
Thomas Piketty, Michael J. Sandel
Read by Stephen Graybill, Derek Dysart

A dialogue began when Thomas Piketty, a French economist who has written widely on economic equality, and Michael Sandel, a Harvard philosopher, met in May 2024 at the Paris School of Economics. In this edited version, Derek Dysart, as Sandel, interviews Piketty, whose part is narrated by Stephen Graybill. Both have a lot to say about the value of equality, especially as it relates to income and wealth, political power and dignity. Each narrator is respectful of the other. The pace of the discourse allows a moment for one thought to settle before the next is broached. Each narrator is engaged in the conversation and seems eager to hear what the other has to say. *J.E.M.*

Blackstone Audio 2.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798212006620 $15.70
(also CD, MP3)

OTTER COUNTRY: An Unexpected Adventure in the Natural World

Miriam Darlington
Read by Jayne Entwistle



This audiobook is a love song to otters. Nearly a prose poem about the playful mammals, it is presented charmingly by narrator Jayne Entwistle. With her warm voice and English accent Entwistle becomes the author in this first-person account. She makes Darlington's text come alive. You can almost feel it as she tells of stepping onto the soft bottom of a shallow marsh and of carefully observing tracks and scents of otters on the move. The author takes listeners across Britain from Cornwall to Scotland as she tracks down various species of otters, creatures she describes as mysterious, graceful, and clever. Along the way, she offers up lessons in biology, ecology, and love of the natural world. *R.C.G.*

Tantor Media 12.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade: DD ISBN 9798855536263 $19.99

CLEAVAGE: Men, Women, and the Space Between Us

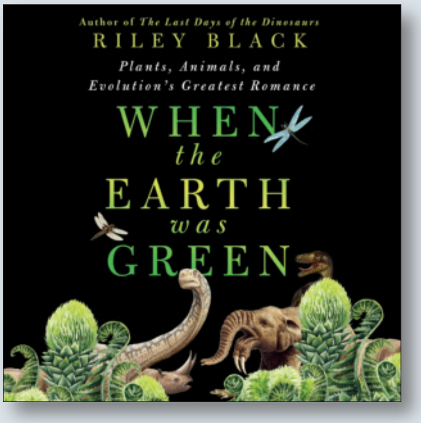
Jennifer Finney Boylan
Read by Gabra Zackman, Jennifer Finney Boylan

More than 20 years after her bestseller, *She's Not There*, trans author and activist Jennifer Finney Boylan presents a nuanced view of parenting, gender expectations, and growing older. Gabra Zackman narrates with warmth that makes listening seem like an intimate talk with a friend. Zackman mirrors Boylan's wit and capacity for deep reflection. Her narration is especially touching in passages about Boylan's daughter Zai, who also transitioned in adulthood. Here, Zackman captures the conflicting emotions Boylan experiences as a mother who understands the joy and challenges to be found in the journey Zai faces. Boylan narrates the introduction and acknowledgments herself, contributing to the production's overall authenticity. This is a moving performance by a narrator who truly empathizes with the author. *C.J.C.*

Macmillan Audio 8.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250383907 $19.99

WHEN THE EARTH WAS GREEN: Plants, Animals, and Evolution's Greatest Romance

Riley Black
Read by Wren Mack


Author of The Last Days of the Dinosaurs
RILEY BLACK
Plants, Animals, and Evolution's Greatest Romance
WHEN the EARTH was GREEN

Paleontologist Riley Black's vivid writing and Wren Mack's wonderstruck narration make these vignettes of prehistoric life on Earth fascinating listening. Traveling through the planet's geologic epochs, Black imagines detailed scenes, and Mack's engaged performance evokes the weather, landscape, creatures, and interactions that Black describes. Yes, dinosaurs, insects, proto-mammals, and eventually humans all make appearances, but Black's main focus is on the plants of prehistory and how they fundamentally affected the development of the planet as we know it. In extensive appendices, Black explains the science behind each of her scenarios and why she chose specific organisms to highlight. Mack's narration brings suitable drama to the story of life on Earth. *J.M.D.*

Macmillan Audio 9.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250354211 $26.99

Mack's narration brings suitable drama to the story of life on Earth.

EVERYTHING MUST GO: The Stories We Tell About the End of the World

Dorian Lynskey
Read by Dorian Lynskey

In a voice full of curiosity, insight, and the driest sense of humor, author/podcaster Dorian Lynskey takes the listener on a fascinating and comprehensive tour of one of civilization's most durable tropes: the end of the world. Mixing fact, fiction, and prediction, Lynskey smoothly moves from the terror of the 1883 eruption of Krakatoa to the Martian "invasion" of H.G. Welles's "War of the Worlds" to innumerable plagues throughout the centuries and to the ever-present threat of nuclear annihilation. Occasionally, Lynskey's voice betrays a tone of worry or despair. But, for the most part, after cataloging a wide range of books about catastrophes ranging from the works of Rod Serling to those of Mary Shelley and the Bible's "Book of Revelation," she ensures that this audiobook is surprisingly entertaining. *B.P.*

Random House Audio 14.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593912911 $25.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593912928 $76.00

ON AIR: The Triumph and Tumult of NPR

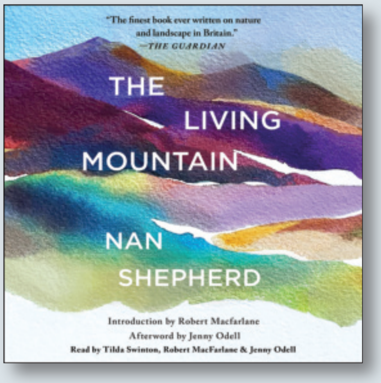
Steve Oney
Read by Stephen Graybill, Steve Oney [Prologue]

Narrator Stephen Graybill uses a measured tone and deliberate pace to tell the raucous story of the founding and vicissitudes of National Public Radio. Longtime listeners will recognize well-known names like Bob Edwards and Susan Stamberg, but Oney also dives deep into how managers and producers covered controversial issues, warts and all. Oney documents the network from its beginning in 1971 as a counterculture home with the likes of Allen Ginsberg, who illuminated “flower power” on the network’s inaugural broadcast of “All Things Considered,” to its present status as a trusted member of mainstream media. Most entertaining is the focus on the signature program and finest example of what NPR does best: the Pulitzer Prize-winning “This American Life,” hosted by Ira Glass. *R.O.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 21.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781797192642 $34.99

THE LIVING MOUNTAIN

Nan Shepherd
Read by Tilda Swinton, Robert Macfarlane [Intro.], Jenny Odell [Afterword]


“The finest book ever written on nature and landscape in Britain.”
—THE GUARDIAN
THE LIVING MOUNTAIN
NAN SHEPHERD
Introduction by Robert Macfarlane
Afterword by Jenny Odell
Read by Tilda Swinton, Robert MacFarlane & Jenny Odell

An audiobook for the soul. This exquisite work of nature writing celebrating Scotland’s Cairngorms mountains remains a classic of ecological observation. Tilda Swinton’s rendition of Nan Shepherd’s poetic prose mesmerizes. Her tone is exceptionally clear, her pace adds drama, and her style of narrating is immersive. Written in the 1940s, the book remained unpublished until the 1970s. Shepherd appreciated these mountains in all seasons and lived near them for much of her life. The language sings: “Nothing is so ghostly as mist over snow.” The flora and fauna of the landscape fulfill and inspire her. She finds meaning in the granite, knows the danger (people freeze to death), and experiences the “profound contentment” the Cairngorms offer. Listen to the text, then the intro and afterword. *A.D.M.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 4.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668137543 $17.99

An audiobook for the soul.

NOTORIOUS: Portraits of Stars from Hollywood, Culture, Fashion, and Tech

Maureen Dowd
Read by Maureen Dowd

Narrating with a steady, measured rhythm, *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd introduces the listener to the best of her long-form, in-depth interviews with some of the most recognizable personalities in popular culture. Dowd is most at ease and sounds practically playful when discussing her favorites, such Kate Winslet, Paul Newman, and Candice Bergen. She’s a bit more reverent with the likes of Tom Stoppard and Diane von Furstenberg. She allows her sharp journalistic instincts to kick in when she takes on a new type of mega-star of American media—the mega billionaire. Her 2017 interviews with Elon Musk and Peter Thiel are her most insightful contributions and seem almost prescient today. Maureen Dowd—a serious investigator of serious cultural icons. *B.P.*

Harper Audio 16.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063392250 $28.79

ENDS OF THE EARTH: Journeys to the Polar Regions in Search of Life, the Cosmos, and Our Future

Neil Shubin
Read by Fred Berman

Narrator Fred Berman takes listeners on an absorbing journey through Arctic and Antarctic landscapes, revealing the myriad ways that ice has been intricately connected to life throughout Earth’s history. Berman communicates paleontologist and evolutionary biologist Neil Shubin’s passion for the complexities of polar regions. His search for fishapod fossils introduced him to the interdisciplinary wonders explored in this audiobook, which range from meteorites, ancient viruses, and cold and light cycle effects on living organisms to humanity’s role in shaping these regions. Past scientists and explorers also illuminate ice’s integral role in our world’s past, present, and future. Berman’s palpable excitement and earnest tone connect listeners to this fascinating material. *J.R.T.*

Penguin Audio 7.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217011957 $20.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217011964 $95.00

STUCK: How the Privileged and the Propertied Broke the Engine of American Opportunity

Yoni Appelbaum
Read by Ari Fliakos

Ari Fliakos expertly delivers this timely audiobook about how some Americans get geographically trapped, preventing them from accessing better livelihoods. Appelbaum’s research takes aim at the use of neighborhood covenants, codes, and other systemic tools to prevent diversification. Relating to these issues, housing costs have skyrocketed in the most desirable neighborhoods, making it nearly impossible to move to where the jobs are. In one devastating passage, the city of Flint, Michigan, is discussed. A once-prosperous area for the auto industry, Flint now suffers from massive unemployment, yet many families can’t afford to leave. Fliakos’s voice is clear, serious, and accessible. His performance ensures that listeners grasp all the key details of this important work. *S.P.C.*

Random House Audio 9.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade: DD ISBN 9798217020652 $22.50
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217020669 $95.00

Author Brad Meltzer

Photo by Donna Newman

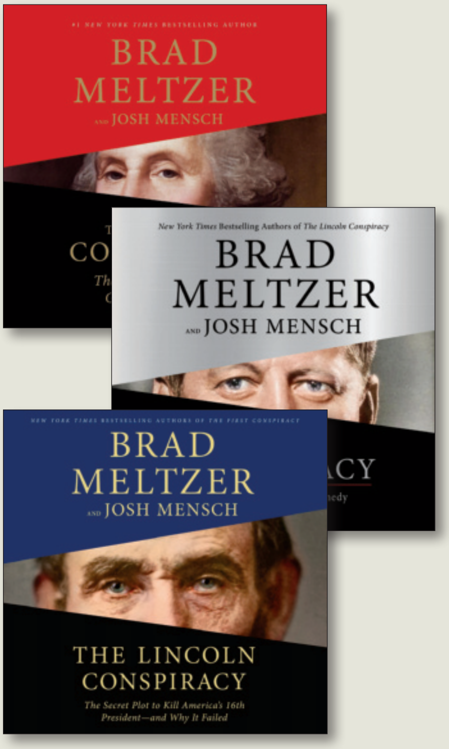
MAKE MAGIC: The Book of Inspiration You Didn't Know You Needed
Brad Meltzer
Read by Brad Meltzer

Brad Meltzer
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
make magic
THE BOOK OF inspiration YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU NEEDED

Writer Brad Meltzer is one of those rare people whose voices exude sincerity, honesty, and a love of humanity. This brief work is largely based on the commencement speech he gave at his son's graduation from the University of Michigan. As anyone who's ever attended a speech by Meltzer knows, his words are always inspiring and real. Here, he talks about his own career and life, which were not always easy. He equates life with magic, which he says always involves one of four things: making something appear, disappear, switch places, or transform into something else. One thing is for certain about a Meltzer speech: You'll feel better about life after you hear it. He's just got that touch of magic. *M.S.*

Harper Audio 24 mins. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063440685 $5.99

You'll feel better about life after you hear it.


BRAD MELTZER AND JOSH MENSCH
BRAD MELTZER AND JOSH MENSCH
BRAD MELTZER AND JOSH MENSCH
THE LINCOLN CONSPIRACY
The Secret Plot to Kill America's 16th President—and Why It Failed

More Listening

THE FIRST CONSPIRACY: The Secret Plot to Kill George Washington
Brad Meltzer, Josh Mensch, read by Scott Brick
Macmillan Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: CD, DD

THE JFK CONSPIRACY: The Secret Plot to Kill Kennedy and Why It Failed
Brad Meltzer, Josh Mensch, read by Scott Brick
Macmillan Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: CD, DD
Library Ed.: DD

THE LINCOLN CONSPIRACY: The Secret Plot to Kill America's 16th President—and Why It Failed
Brad Meltzer, Josh Mensch, read by Scott Brick
Macmillan Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: CD, DD

THE NAZI CONSPIRACY: The Secret Plot to Kill Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill
Brad Meltzer, Josh Mensch, read by Scott Brick
Macmillan Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: CD, DD
Library Ed.: DD

LEAD LIKE YOU MEAN IT: Lessons on Integrity and Purpose from the C-Suite

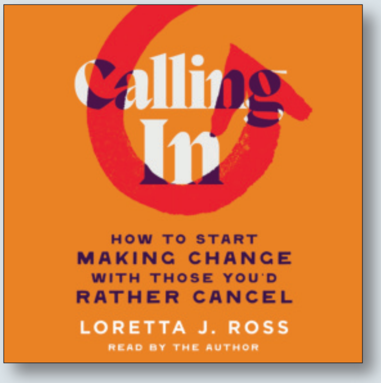
Laysha Ward
Read by Laysha Ward, Maria Shriver

Laysha Ward narrates her own story with clarity, confidence, and a comforting tone. She invites listeners of all ages and backgrounds to reflect on the lessons she learned from her 32-year corporate career. Ward also shares guidance she received from luminaries like Coretta Scott King and Maya Angelou. With sincerity and strength, she encourages listeners to know themselves, show themselves, and care for themselves. Candid about her challenges as a Black woman with a deep sense of service, Ward offers tactical strategies for navigating business with integrity. Her voice is warm, inspiring, and authentic, making this audiobook both personal and practical. Listeners will want to keep a notepad nearby to capture the many takeaways. *E.Q.*

Penguin Audio 7.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade: DD ISBN 9798217012428 $20.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217012435 $66.50

CALLING IN: How to Start Making Change with Those You'd Rather Cancel

Loretta J. Ross
Read by Loretta J. Ross



Loretta J. Ross delivers her audiobook in an authentic-sounding voice. A longtime activist, Ross provides a detailed discussion on the practice of "calling in" people who need education and support on difficult issues. This is different from "calling out" someone, either in person or on social media, an approach Ross asserts may feel good in the moment but has limited positive impact. Ross is open about her own life experiences and education, which provided insights on how to connect with people where they are. Her work includes group facilitation for incarcerated men and an extended interaction with a former white supremacist. Both are examples of how "calling in" is demanding but meaningful. Ross's voice reflects the compassion and intellect necessary for this work. *S.P.C.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 8.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781797186696 $24.99

Ross's voice reflects the compassion and intellect necessary for this work.

DEAR WRITER: Pep Talks & Practical Advice for the Creative Life

Maggie Smith
Read by Maggie Smith

Poet Maggie Smith's newest audiobook expands her purview to offer all kinds of artists helpful advice about what she sees as the 10 essential elements of creativity: attention, wonder, vision, play, surprise, vulnerability, restlessness, tenacity, connection, and hope. Her light, sweet-sounding voice often assumes a poet's studied rhythmic cadence as she narrates with beautifully clear enunciation. The result is a listenable experience that, perhaps inadvertently, highlights her professional background. Yet the pace feels right for a book chock-full of ideas. As befits the author of the poem "Good Bones," which went viral in 2016, her advice is both kind and tough-minded. What's most important, she emphasizes, is that "we have to love making things more than we love having made them." *A.C.S.*

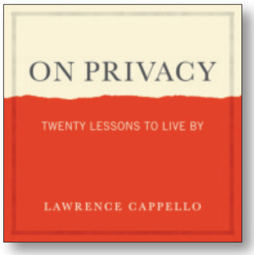
Simon & Schuster Audio 6.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781797193335 $19.99

THE NEXT DAY: Transitions, Change, and Moving Forward

Melinda French Gates
Read by Melinda French Gates

Philanthropist Melinda French Gates, a woman of significant personal and financial means and privilege, deftly writes and narrates this relatively brief reflection on life's transitions. Gates focuses on the days that follow a series of catastrophic events. The ex-wife of Microsoft founder Bill Gates provides a helpful, consistent, upbeat text and audio performance. Her warm tone and measured pacing are employed in discussing matters such as divorce, loss of a loved one, becoming a parent and grandparent, and, perhaps most painfully, her departure from the philanthropic Gates Foundation. Value, she says, can be found in doing your best; that's all you can do because there is no perfection. Therapy and setting one's own agenda are also presented boldly. *W.A.G.*

Macmillan Audio 3.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250388896 $10.99
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250419743 $59.99



ON PRIVACY: Twenty Lessons to Live By

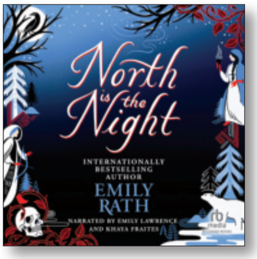
Lawrence Cappello
Read by Gregory Jones

Narrator Gregory Jones deftly presents 20 lessons on privacy protection, using smooth transitions and well-timed pitch inflections to maintain listeners' attention and buy-in. The lessons provide concrete actions that are built on convincing evidence. For example, in "What the Constitution Says," the author advises on how to respond to police questioning. In "Small Data Paint Big Pictures," listeners are advised on how to set up a "burner" email account for situations when one doesn't want to reveal one's main email account. In "Our Bodies Are Sacred," the author provides contact information on organizations that offer help dealing with so-called revenge porn. Note: This audiobook weighs in at 130 minutes—a negative for some, a plus for others. *R.W.S.*

Hachette Audio 2.25 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668646557 $18.99

NORTH IS THE NIGHT: The Tuonela Duet, Book 1

Emily Rath
Read by Khaya Fraites, Emily Lawrence


North is the Night
INTERNATIONALLY BESTSELLING AUTHOR
EMILY RATH
NARRATED BY EMILY LAWRENCE AND KHAYA FRAITES

Khaya Fraites and Emily Lawrence give spirited performances in this introduction to a rich duology based on Finnish fantasy. Aina and Siiri have been separated by the death gods as they work to survive a very harsh winter. Aina is sent to endure Tuonela, the underworld, and Siiri travels to save her. Both women embark on challenging trials, and Fraites and Lawrence depict them with an intense narration. While Aina is cleverly trying to dodge the corruption of the gods and Siiri battles the wild elements in the mortal world, they recount memories of their bond with fondness. Action scenes are plentiful and strongly performed, creating anticipation for the next installment. *G.M.*

Recorded Books 18 hrs. Unabridged
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798894867427 $25.00
(also CD, MP3)

MURDER BY MEMORY: Dorothy Gentleman, Book 1

Olivia Waite
Read by Blair Baker

Blair Baker narrates this sci-fi mystery. Dorothy Gentleman is a detective aboard the HMS *Fairweather*, an interstellar passenger ship—spaceship, that is. To her surprise, she wakes up in an unfamiliar body just as a murder victim is found, a situation that leads to several more terrible developments. Baker's depiction of Dorothy's initial confusion over her predicament quickly gives way to confidence and competence as she finds her investigative footing. Baker's tone and cadence are a good fit for the semiretired ship's detective. While Baker's portrayals of the murder suspects are slightly indistinguishable, other secondary characters, such as Dorothy's nephew, Ruthie, and the ship's computer, Ferry, are charming and distinctive. *K.M.P.*

Macmillan Audio 2.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250386083 $10.99

WHEN THE MOON HITS YOUR EYE

John Scalzi
Read by Wil Wheaton

Wil Wheaton narrates the newest comic sci-fi novel by John Scalzi. When the moon unexpectedly turns to cheese, humanity has to deal with the aftereffects. Wheaton chronicles the reactions of a sweeping cross-section of Americans during the first lunar cycle post-change: Scientists and government officials, billionaires and moguls, cheesemongers and retirees—literally everyone is affected. Wheaton's occasionally bombastic style excels at highlighting the general absurdity of the situation, but he also proves adept at the quietly powerful scenes; for example, when the pastor comforts his congregation, who are grappling with doubt about the nature of salvation, and when the terminally ill former rock star chooses to end his life on his own terms. Equal parts hilarious and comforting, Wheaton's narration is an all-around delight. *K.M.P.*

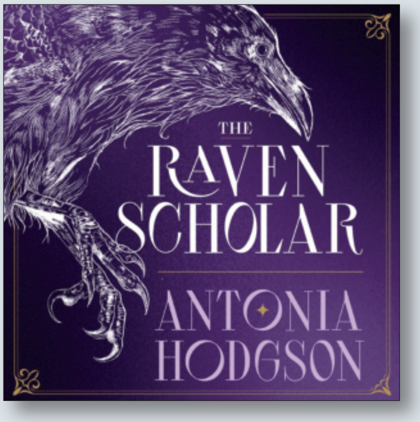
Audible, Inc. 10 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD $33.90

> *"It was wonderful being able to play and incorporate animalistic and birdlike flavours to the vocal qualities of the characters. Antonia's book is brilliant, and narrating it was a labor of love for me."*
> —Narrator Daphne Kouma

Photo by Claire Grogan

THE RAVEN SCHOLAR: Eternal Path Trilogy, Book 1

Antonia Hodgson
Read by Daphne Kouma



Narrator Daphne Kouma wows in this epic fantasy/murder mystery/political thriller. In a society built around eight powerful animal spirits, a new emperor is chosen every 24 years when those vying for the throne compete in a series of trials. When the Raven palace's contender is found dead, scholar Neema Kraa finds herself simultaneously taking her place in the trials and investigating her murder. Kouma expertly leads listeners through the lush world-building and the twisting, action-packed plot. Most impressively, she takes on the voices of many characters, including the Raven spirit, who not only tells the story, but also interjects with asides and the occasional call of "Kraa! Kraa!" It's a wonderfully immersive and satisfying performance of a richly imagined novel. *J.M.D.*

Hachette Audio 24 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668647806 $44.99

WHERE THE AXE IS BURIED
Ray Nayler
Read by Eunice Wong

It takes just the right narrator to weave a story of the world ending. Eunice Wong proves up to the task in this fascinating audiobook. In Nayler's gripping cybernetic thriller, governments across Europe start to crumble when their AI leaders begin to fail. Wong skillfully brings to life a handful of characters who get caught up in the turmoil of a deteriorating Europe. She radiates the characters' confusion as they struggle to reunite with their loved ones against a dangerous backdrop. Wong also animates the vile human political powers who are in large part responsible for this chaos. This production is timely, with technology propping up authoritarian governments. That relevance seeps through, thanks to Wong's versatile performance. *D.E.M.*

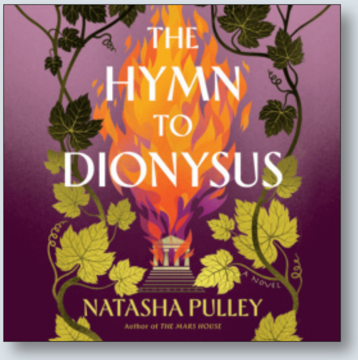
Macmillan Audio 9 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250385994 $26.99

DARK SPACE
Rob Hart, Alex Seguar
Read by Timothy Andrés Pabon, Nicol Zanzarella

Sometimes employing a pair of narrators to deliver an audiobook just makes sense. This crackling space thriller is a perfect example. Nicol Zanzarella voices recently demoted spy Corin Timony, along with the other characters who work at the multinational spook agency called The Bazaar, which is located on the lunar colony of New Destiny. Narrator Timothy Andrés Pabon animates pilot Jose Carilles and all those on the *Mosaic*, an exploratory interstellar ship. When the two estranged friends discover a conspiracy, they struggle to unravel it. Bringing to life multinational characters from Earth and aliens across the universe gives Zanzarella and Pabon great opportunities to show off their chops. They expertly deliver a mix of accents and intonations that differentiate the many characters. *D.E.M.*

Blackstone Audio 9.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798212218634 $22.95
(also CD, MP3)
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798212218627 $54.95 (also CD)

THE HYMN TO DIONYSUS
Natasha Pulley
Read by Sid Sagar



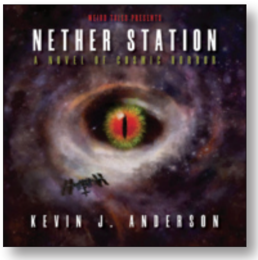
Sid Sagar immediately draws listeners into this riveting novel set in ancient Thebes. Phaidros is a soldier who was raised to fight. Now he's in his 30s, lonely and grieving the loss of his sworn companion even as he trains a new generation. He's immensely likable, and the first-person perspective and colloquial language mean that Sagar is able to bring listeners intimately close to Phaidros and everything he experiences. When chaotic things begin to happen in Thebes—singing, dancing, and an explosion of wild nature, even though the city is suffering from a terrible drought—Phaidros finds himself caught up in political machinations and caught in the orbit of a compelling witch healer named Dionysus, whom Sagar sets apart with a slightly different British accent. Listeners won't want this lovely, moving story to end. *J.M.D.*

Bloomsbury Publishing 16 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781639735136 $30.00

> *Listeners won't want this lovely, moving story to end.*

NETHER STATION
Kevin J. Anderson
Read by Scott Brick

Scott Brick narrates a fantastical adventure that blends science fiction and cosmic horror. Cammie, an astrophysicist, is part of the first team sent to study the Nether anomaly. Researchers believe the anomaly might be a means to travel deeper into the universe, but there are signs that ancient beings have already explored it. Brick plays with rhythm and cadence to build tension wonderfully by stressing certain words or pausing for a beat before quietly emitting a whisper. The unsettling premise that humanity isn't alone builds amid Brick's narration as Anderson's eerie science fiction adventure brims with shocks and horrors. The well-rounded characters and plausible science seem even more realistic as Brick patiently lures listeners deeper and deeper into this cosmic story. *J.M.M.*



Blackstone Audio 10.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798200688142 $22.95
(also CD, MP3)
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798200688135 $54.95 (also CD)

THE AFTER HOURS
Aspen Andersen
Read by Suzanne Elise Freeman

This sweeping time-travel fantasy is both innovative and moving, and Suzanne Freeman gives it a terrific narration. Her voices are distinct and clear, and she deftly delivers realistic female and male voices. Sloane Becker is haunted by events that took place on graduation night. When she discovers she has the ability to travel through time, she keeps being swept back to that same night, which causes time conflicts and endangers her life. Freeman helps listeners keep the timeframes straight—although the emotions portrayed have minimal variety. Still, the story is mesmerizing, and Freeman's portrayal of Sloane's complicated abilities will keep the listener engaged and intrigued. *C.F.*

CamCat Books 12.5 hrs. Unabridged
Digital Download: DD ISBN 9780744311563 $24.95

Author Amal El-Mohtar

Photo by Ainslie Coghill

> *"To have the audiobook be this treasure trove of narration and audio production, and to have my sister and I participate in it—it's been just incredible."*

By Leslie Fine

The term "ballad" brings to mind stories shared in verse. They might be immersive narrative poems or tales set to music; they could involve centuries-old traditional folk poetry or a set of Bob Dylan songs. Amal El-Mohtar's new audiobook, *The River Has Roots*, is a kind of ballad in its own right—one that builds on the form with collaboration, transformation, and love.

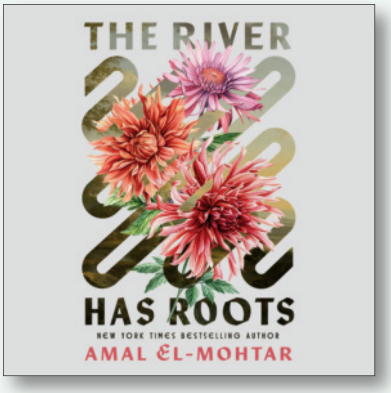
El-Mohtar writes fiction, poetry, and criticism. With Max Gladstone, she co-wrote the award-winning *This Is How You Lose the Time War*. Her many other honors include Nebula, Locus, and Hugo awards, as well as the Richard Jefferies Poetry Prize. El-Mohtar is a three-time winner of the Rhysling Award for Best Short Poem, and she has been *The New York Times*'s science fiction and fantasy columnist since 2018. "I take writing quite broadly," El-Mohtar says. "I've written for games and game ephemera. I've written a comic. Each one has its own challenges and curiosities and interests."

The audiobook production of *The River Has Roots*, narrated by Gem Carmella, grew through extensive collaboration, something El-Mohtar values. "Historically, I have been very collaborative in my approach to writing, so I have really enjoyed things that involve working with another person and building a creative partnership. It's been extraordinarily wonderful to see how much creativity has been brought to *The River Has Roots* from so many different people in so many different forms. To have the print publication include Kathleen Neeley's illustrations in it, and to have the audiobook be this treasure trove of narration and audio production, and to have my sister and I participate in it—it's been just incredible."

El-Mohtar was encouraged to bring her own ideas to the audiobook production. She wholeheartedly appreciated Gem Carmella's narrative skill right away. "As soon as I heard Gem's voice, it was so rich and so wonderful! I felt like it was

THE RIVER HAS ROOTS

Amal El-Mohtar
Read by Gem Carmella



Gem Carmella narrates a magical novella inspired by traditional ballads. Sisters Esther and Ysabel use their musical talents to tend the enchanted willow their family has honored for generations. When an unwanted suitor appears, everything they love is suddenly at risk. Carmella's narration perfectly blends the fantastical elements of fairy tales with the macabre elements of traditional murder ballads, capturing Esther's emotional turmoil as she is faced with an unwanted decision. As Esther navigates between two very different suitors in entirely different worlds, Carmella deftly portrays her agony at what each choice will mean. Musical effects combine with Carmella's singing at key moments, making fraught scenes utterly devastating but ultimately more powerful. A stunning performance. *K.M.P.*

Macmillan Audio 4 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781250353351 $10.99
Library Ed.: ISBN 9781250417541 $54.99

A stunning performance.

so suited to the story. And then she gamely sang portions of the text in her audition. Everything about her fit my vision."

Then the collaborative spirit blossomed even further. Music is ever-present in the stort, and El-Mohtar had an idea to bring that aspect to the fore of the audiobook. The story features two musical sisters, and El-Mohtar and her sister, Dounya, share a musical history, as well. "My sister and I play music and sing together. I play the harp, and she plays the flute," El-Mohtar says. She adds, "My sister is, as far as I'm concerned, a proper musician, conservatory trained. I am a writer who plays the harp. I make the distinction because she has training and expertise, and I have enthusiasm."

That enthusiasm was well received at Macmillan Audio, and the sisters worked to develop and rehearse music for the audiobook. Then they recorded together at a local music studio, an experience not unlike entering a different sort of fantastical world. "We were really dazzled by the studio space. The walls have cool material on them to manage the sound. We had to shed our shoes. There was a main entrance, and then there were several doors to go through to get deeper into this place that is more and more insulated from the sounds of the outside world. It's absolutely like a fairy world."

The recording process proved memorable and magical. "We did not feel time passing at all," El-Mohtar says. "When I think of the experience, I think of soft golden light. Everything was warm and gentle. It was really special—getting to sing and play with my sister, in that space. We could always catch each other's eyes as we played together. I felt so accomplished in the wake of it."

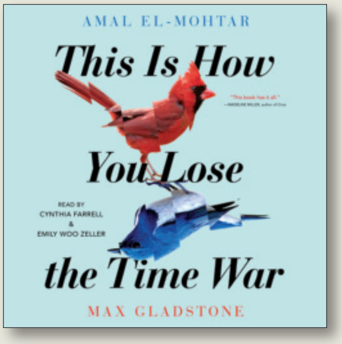
With traditional ballad themes at its heart, *The River Has Roots* winds its way through the story of Esther and Ysabel, two sisters whose songs nurture enchanted willows. The music makes for a distinctly memorable audio production. "It all came together, and I was blown away by the result. The absolute delight of knowing this audiobook, which is partially dedicated to my sister, also has our voices and our music on it is extraordinary to me."

More Listening

THIS IS HOW YOU LOSE THE TIME WAR

Amal El-Mohtar, Max Gladstone
Read by Cynthia Farrell, Emily Woo Zeller

Simon & Schuster Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.:



Amal El-Mohtar (r) and her sister Dounya playing music for *The River Has Roots*

DRUMINDOR: Riyria Chronicles, Book 5

Michael J. Sullivan
Read by Tim Gerard Reynolds

Tim Gerard Reynolds gorgeously narrates this Elan world novel, the fifth in the Riyria Chronicles. In this prequel, a disgruntled dwarf has been fired and threatens to wreak havoc on the towers of Drumindor, thus destroying the lavish town of Tur Del Fur. Royce and Hadrian, friends who together form Riyria, are hired to find the dwarf and stop him. Reynolds brings depth that adds texture to the story: Dwarves have Scottish brogues and raspy voices; evil leaders have deep, slow voices; and the most evil character has a whispery, low voice that is sure to give listeners nightmares. Reynolds manages to make the heroes human as they experience fear and courage in equal measure. *L.M.G.*

Recorded Books 20.5 hrs. Unabridged
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798890596802 $29.99
(also CD, MP3)

WOOING THE WITCH QUEEN: Queens of Villainy, Book 1

Stephanie Burgis
Read by Amanda Leigh Cobb

Amanda Leigh Cobb delights listeners with the first in the Queens of Villainy series, which is perfect for those who like their romantasy on the lighter side. A case of mistaken identity has Archduke Felix serving as librarian and wizard for the wicked witch, Queen Saskia. The empire thinks Felix is a tyrant bent on conquering all. In reality, he is kept under the thumb of his former regent. Before he can request sanctuary from Queen Saskia, he learns she wants him dead. Ultimately, they both uncover the unexpected. Cobb breathes life into the eclectic cast of characters, who range from vicious, inhuman monsters to humans and witches. She gives them the voices their personalities deserve. She also entertains as she captures the humor liberally sprinkled throughout the story. *A.L.S.M.*

Macmillan Audio 8.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250385727 $19.99

JANUARIES: Stories of Love, Magic & Betrayal

Olivie Blake
Read by Alexandra Palting, Daniel Henning, David Monteith, Ferdelle Capistrano, Olivie Blake, Stephanie Németh-Parker, Steve West

A full cast of narrators, including the author, delivers this enchanting collection of short stories about love, magic, and betrayal. Stephanie Németh-Parker voices a woman who grants wishes at a bridge during the full moon, enhancing the romance with her careful pacing and delivery of banter. David Monteith portrays a man who accidentally kills the woman he intends to marry, only for her to come back and haunt him. Monteith captures the laugh-out-loud moments with outstanding comedic timing. Alex Palting shows impressive vocal range in a story about a woman and her parallel selves in alternate universes, including a delightfully sinister cat. Each of the 14 stories is tenderly delivered by an emotionally committed narrator. *A.K.R.*

Macmillan Audio 15 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250353603 $32.99
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250400369 $94.99

> *"Really great writing tests your mettle as a narrator—keeping track of so many diverse characters in a highly complex plot. I absolutely loved playing with them and figuring out how they sound and how they find their way through the thicket."*
> —Narrator Andrew Fallaize

Photo by Deborah Lopez

A DROP OF CORRUPTION: Shadow of the Leviathan, Book 2

Robert Jackson Bennett
Read by Andrew Fallaize

The talented Andrew Fallaize reprises his narration of *The Tainted Cup*, the first in this series. Fallaize aptly narrates this imaginative and suspenseful story in which older, experienced Ana and young Din investigate the unsettling murder of a treasury officer. Through Din's perfect memory and Ana's brilliance, they discover a plot that runs deep, threatening the empire's future. But Ana may have finally met her match; can she and Din find the mastermind and save everyone? Fallaize's narration adds multidimensional expression to the characters; his shifts in accent, tone, and timbre will captivate listeners. His characterization of Ana showcases her mercurial nature and humorous outlook on life. A wonderful, satisfying listening experience for lovers of mysteries and fantasy. *A.M.*

Random House Audio 16 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593949948 $25.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593949955 $95.00

LES NORMAUX: Les Normaux, Book 1

Janine Janssen, S. Al Sabado
Read by Janine Janssen, S. Al Sabado, Fajer Al-Kaisi, Jean Brassard, Xavier Casals, Alexander Cendese, Kyla Garcia, Ramón de Ocampo, Abby Manning, Christopher Salazar, André Santana, Devon Sorvari, Jeanne Syquia

This audiobook adaptation of the graphic novel features a stellar cast and vibrant soundtrack. Sébastien, portrayed by Ramón de Ocampo with a French accent, is freshly moved into a new apartment and ready to finally learn magic. Elia, depicted suavely by Fajer Al-Kaisi in an Italian accent, is the hot supermodel vampire next door. Alexander Cendese voices Sébastien's adorable pet rabbit, Pierre, in a snarky tone as he watches the two men navigate a new friendship and budding romance. The banter between de Ocampo and Al-Kaisi is filled with tension. A subtle vocal effect as Christopher Salazar voices Drew, an undead human who is mute, depicts how he communicates through his phone. Music and sound effects immerse listeners in the rich setting of a supernatural Paris. *A.K.R.*

Harper Audio 2 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063414709 $27.99

PENRIC AND THE BANDIT: Penric & Desdemona, Book 13

Lois McMaster Bujold
Read by Grover Gardner

Golden Voice Grover Gardner is a familiar narrator to listeners of the Penric & Desdemona audiobooks. Using a treasure map, Penric and his demon, Desdemona, are hunting for a long-forsaken monastery that may hold valuable theological documents. They meet Roz, a bandit who has eyes only for the treasure map, and, of course, adventure ensues. This novella set in the World of the Five Gods is the most recent of more than a dozen stories, but it stands on its own. Gardner slips into the familiar characters seamlessly. His leisurely pace and style befit Penric, and he handles the understated humor and magic without interrupting the flow of the story. *J.E.M.*

Blackstone Audio 4 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798874866631 $13.49
(also CD, MP3)

THE WINTER GODDESS

Megan Barnard
Read by Aoife McMahon, Aidan Kelly

THE WINTER GODDESS
A NOVEL
MEGAN BARNARD
Author of JEZEBEL

Aoife McMahon and Aidan Kelly manifest a pantheon of Irish gods in this enchanting story of family and loss. After killing dozens with a never-ending frost, Cailleach is forced to live multiple lives to learn the responsibility of godhood. Newly human and fragile, Cailleach forms unshakable bonds with a small dog, several lovers, and her daughter—only to lose them again and again. She opens her heart to humanity and uncovers a secret that threatens the sanctity of her godly family. McMahon's stunning narration reveals the fierce regality of the mother goddess Danu and the ever-growing maturity of Cailleach. Kelly's interludes weave a storyteller's perspective into Cailleach's journey. While the story centers on the divine, it's really about human grief and the love that makes loss worth enduring. *A.A.H.*

Penguin Audio 9 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593911747 $22.00
Books on Tape
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593911754 $76.00

An enchanting story of family and loss.

THE ORDER OF GRIMM

Shiromi Arserio
Read by Shiromi Arserio

Performed by the Author
SHIROMI ARSERIO
THE ORDER OF GRIMM

Veteran narrator Shiromi Arserio takes on a new role as author, and who better to narrate the audiobook than she? Former assassin Samara is hired to infiltrate a magical auction and rescue the girl who is being auctioned off. It's all the sweeter because if Samara succeeds, she will get revenge against the man who sold her as a child. The heist requires careful planning, and Arserio lays the groundwork carefully, depicting colorful characters in the process. In the best storytelling tradition, she maintains an intimate relationship with the listener. Each chapter begins with a quote from a historical document or chronicle, which provides a bigger-picture comment or social commentary. Arserio smoothly transitions from those to the business at hand. *J.E.M.*

Blackstone Audio 9.5 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798228358140 $17.43
(also CD, MP3)

CATAN: Catan, Book 1

Klaus Teuber
Read by Evan Sibley

Evan Sibley narrates a sweeping historical fantasy inspired by the iconic board game Settlers of Catan. Three half-brothers—Thorolf, Yngvi, and Digur—attempt to help a Viking princess escape oppressive rule. But before they can succeed, they're exiled. The brothers and a handful of allies leave on a difficult journey in hopes of finding a new land: Catan, the Land of the Sun. However, after arriving there, the brothers must survive while forging a new community. Sibley maintains a steady tone throughout the story, which is a blend of fact and fantasy centered on very human characters who are trying to survive. He imbues the action with pulse-pounding drama and gravitas. *J.M.M.*

Blackstone Audio 19.75 hrs. Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798874714475 $34.95
(also CD, MP3)
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798874714468 $79.95 (also CD)

ON THE WINGS OF LA NOCHE
Vanessa L. Torres
Read by Frankie Corzo

How can we let go of the one we loved and lost? That's the central question that Frankie Corzo so expertly poses in her enthralling narration of this YA fantasy-romance. By day, Estrella "Noche" Villanueva is a 17-year-old who is mourning the death of her first love, Dante. But by night, Noche transforms into a Lechuza, a beautiful black owl who guides spirits to the sky. Refusing to say goodbye to Dante's spirit, Noche slowly becomes untethered from her sense of self. And having been assigned an attractive new lab partner isn't helping. As in so many of her performances, Corzo's narration superbly balances the ethereal and the real. It's a perfect mix for this story of loss and grief and knowing when and how to let go. *A.A.H.*

Listening Library 11 hrs. Unabridged Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217015221 $25.00
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217015238 $63.00

TANGLEROOT
Kalela Williams
Read by Maggie Thompson

TANGLEROOT
KALELA WILLIAMS

Narrator Maggie Thompson immediately captures the difficult relationship that resentful Noni Reid has with her forceful mother, Dr. Radiance Castine. When her mother is appointed president of a Virginia college, she insists that Noni give up a coveted summer internship in costume design in Boston to move to Tangleroot, the plantation built by her ancestor. Thompson's use of accents and tone captures the tension of classism and prejudice in Noni's small Southern town. A shift takes place when Noni discovers an ancestral grave marker that sets her on a course to make sense of the past. Tension increases as the historical mystery unfolds and Noni increases her efforts to thwart racism, understand her place in the world, and resolve her relationship with her mother. *S.W.*

Macmillan Audio 11.25 hrs. Unabridged Ages 14+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250373212 $26.99
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250399779 $74.99

THE CREEPY SCHOOL BUS: The Creepy School Bus, Book 1
Paul Hough
Read by Christina Hendricks, Eddie McGee, Erika Alexander, Dacey Else, Devin Breaux, Finn Egan-Liang, Mecca Rogers, Katelynn Kennedy Staggs, James J. Johnson, and a Full Cast

Based on Hough's YouTube text-based horror series, this production is one wild ride as performed by the full cast. When Chloe, voiced by Mecca Rogers, misses her school bus because her math teacher, Miss Langley, voiced by Christina Hendricks, held her for detention after school, she hops on the "backup bus" and soon realizes she's been kidnapped. Classmates Kaitlin (Dacey Else), Jamie (Devin Breaux), and Ping (Finn Egan-Liang) join forces with their teacher/undercover FBI agent, Mr. Warren (Eddie McGee), to find Chloe, along with other students who have mysteriously disappeared. Each actor in the cast of 30 gives a stellar performance full of melodrama. Creepy music and sound effects enhance the tension in this hair-raising story, the first of a series. *S.D.B.*

Recorded Books 4.5 hrs. Unabridged Ages 14+
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9781705039397 $19.99
(also CD, MP3)

Narrator Jefferson White

SUNRISE ON THE REAPING: The Hunger Games
Suzanne Collins
Read by Jefferson White

SUNRISE ON THE REAPING
READ BY JEFFERSON WHITE
A HUNGER GAMES NOVEL BY
SUZANNE COLLINS

Jefferson White shows remarkable skill balancing a youthful cast with the sobering reality they must face. Twenty-four years before Katniss's games, Haymitch, from District 12, must compete in the Hunger Games—with twice the tributes (competitors). White's perfect pacing adds intensity to the brutality of the games and lingering melancholy as Haymitch struggles to maintain his integrity as the people around him keep dying. White smoothly distinguishes a large cast of characters, including stuffy Capitol residents, tributes of all ages and genders, and familiar mentors that fans of the series will remember. Near the end, Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven" is interspersed with the narrative, and White's emotional delivery enhances Haymitch's heartbreak, which is sure to bring listeners to tears. *A.K.R.*

Scholastic Audiobooks 12.75 hrs. Unabridged Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781546171492 $29.99 (also CD)
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9781546171508 $89.99

Photo by Cody Tarr

WHERE THE HEART SHOULD BE

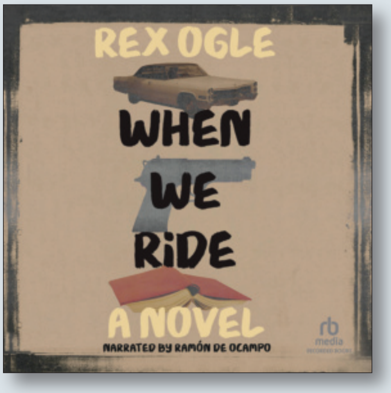
Sarah Crossan
Read by Sophie Jo Wasson

Sophie Jo Wasson transports listeners to Ireland in 1847 with her poignant performance. Like many throughout the country, Nell's family's potato crop is infected with a black rot that makes the potatoes inedible. Farmers are forced to choose between paying their rent from the sale of their oat crops or feeding their families and facing eviction. Amid those tragedies, Nell and the landlord's nephew develop a quiet friendship that, despite their class differences, grows into more. Wasson's lilting intonation and Irish accent take listeners into Nell's world, capturing the devastation, terror, and dashes of hope experienced by the teenager. Secondary characters are made equally vivid with her expressive delivery. Listeners will be tempted to finish this short novel in verse in one sitting. Simply exquisite. *A.L.S.M.*

Harper Audio 4 hrs. Unabridged Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063384972 $18.99

WHEN WE RIDE

Rex Ogle
Read by Ramón de Ocampo



Golden Voice Ramón de Ocampo, who narrated each of the author's memoirs, delivers this hard-hitting YA novel in verse. De Ocampo guides listeners on its emotional journey, using the genre's rhythms to illuminate the relationship between high school seniors Diego and his best friend, Lawson. De Ocampo's poignant delivery highlights the contrast between anxious, rule-following, academically driven Diego and Lawson, who is close to failing in school and turns to selling hard drugs to support his mother. De Ocampo captures the story's highs and lows—from the teenage bliss of riding in a car with a friend to the reality of confronting a violent drug dealer. De Ocampo's narration balances lyrical writing and a gritty story. *S.W.*

Recorded Books 3.5 hrs. Unabridged Ages 14+
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798896790570 $24.99 (also CD, MP3)

De Ocampo's narration balances lyrical writing and a gritty story.

FORTUNE'S KISS

Amber Clement
Read by Diana Bustelo, Krysta Gonzales

Diana Bustelo and Krysta Gonzales narrate this YA story of two friends, each of whom is hoping to fulfill her deepest desire. Bustelo embodies Mayte, who is threatened by debt collectors because her father has lost the family fortune. Her best friend, Lo, portrayed by Gonzales, lives with her abusive father. The girls decide to visit Fortune's Kiss, a magical gambling den that promises to fulfill the winner's most fervent wish. Each is determined to help the other win. Bustelo captures Mayte's determination and rage, while Gonzales fills Lo with self-confidence and resolve. Spanish accents bring cultural authenticity to the story. *L.M.G.*

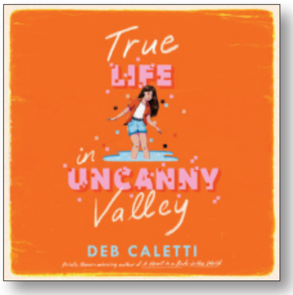
Dreamscape 11.5 hrs. Unabridged Ages 14+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781666678901 $34.99

PODCAST EPISODE
Listen to an audio review at audiofilemagazine.com/podcast

TRUE LIFE IN UNCANNY VALLEY

Deb Caletti
Read by Brittany Pressley

Brittany Pressley portrays a character who, at first, seems like an over-the-top heroine. Eleanor, a senior in high school, was abandoned by her father, Hugo, when she was born. Emotionally abused by her mother, she dreams of living with her father and his family. In response to a job ad, she does just that, hiding her identity and becoming a nanny for her toddler half-brother and a friend to her warm stepmother. She even experiences her first love. But Hugo, a rich tech bro whose most recent invention is a questionable AI product, is far different from what Eleanor imagined. Pressley's portrayals invite listeners into Eleanor's conflicted life. In particular, Pressley captures all of Hugo's ruthlessness in business and pleasure in his privileged lifestyle. *S.W.*



Listening Library 12.25 hrs. Unabridged Ages 14+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217015061 $27.50
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217015078 $75.00

THE ART THIEVES

Andrea L. Rogers
Read by DeLanna Studi

Stevie Henry, a Cherokee teen, is running out of time to survive impending world disasters until she takes up the offer of a mysterious stranger from the future. DeLanna Studi's narration carries a quiet gravity that immediately sets the dark tone of this dystopian novel. Her nuanced performance captures the weight of Stevie's struggle as she is drawn into a secret mission to preserve Indigenous lost art while at the same time navigating her complicated family relationships and her younger brother's battle against cancer. Though Studi's steely delivery can sounds almost too somber at times, she manages to infuse flickers of hope. This young adult mystery offers sharp social commentary on Cherokee history, cultural preservation, and pressing contemporary issues. *M.F.*

Recorded Books 8 hrs. Unabridged Ages 12+
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798891785496 $20.99
(also CD, MP3)

FLAMBOYANTS: The Queer Harlem Renaissance I Wish I'd Known

George M. Johnson
Read by George M. Johnson

Author and activist George M. Johnson skillfully narrates their audiobook about several Black queer artists and performers from the Harlem Renaissance. Their lively delivery keeps listeners interested as they share brief biographies of Langston Hughes, Josephine Baker, and other greats of the era. Each chapter is delightfully introduced with music from the period that highlights the timeframe; however, the repetition of a couple songs seems a missed opportunity to share additional snippets of Black music from the Harlem Renaissance. Both teens and adults will enjoy listening to Johnson's masterful performance in this vivid production, especially when paired with the accompanying pdf, and will be inspired to discover more about the icons of the period. *A.L.S.M.*

Macmillan Audio 2.5 hrs. Unabridged Ages 14+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250354006 $10.99 (also CD)
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9781250399434 $44.99

THE MAGIC FISH

Trung Le Nguyen
Read by Ivan Mok, Quyen Ngo, and a Full Cast

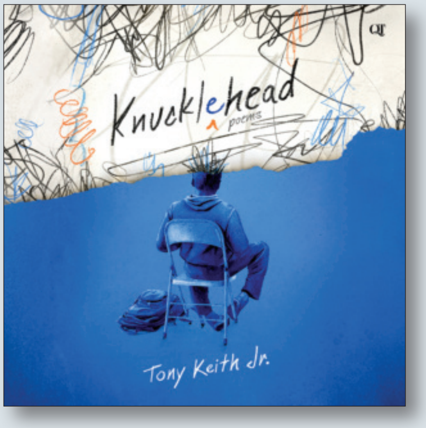
Ivan Mok, Quyen Ngo, and a full cast narrate this award-winning 2020 graphic novel. Mok portrays 13-year-old English-speaking Tien, and Ngo portrays his mother, Helen, a Vietnamese refugee. Mok shows Tien's confusion as he crushes on a male classmate. Ngo conveys Helen's despair at losing her own mother and her longing for the past. Mother and son have always bridged language differences and found connection by reading fairy tales together, so it makes perfect sense that these actors' on-target depictions are interwoven with dramatic, beautifully rendered scenes from stories that resemble "The Little Mermaid," "Tattercoats," and others. Throughout, well-cued sound effects aid in setting scenes, while a superb musical score differentiates contemporary and fantasy settings. *S.W.*

THE MAGIC FISH
TRUNG LE NGUYEN

Listening Library 1.25 hrs. Unabridged Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217072811 $15.00
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217072828 $38.00

KNUCKLEHEAD: Poems

Tony Keith Jr.
Read by Tony Keith Jr.



Tony Keith Jr.—poet, rapper, and hip-hop educator—uses his cultural observations, edgy politics, and sharp ear for concise wordplay and fast rhymes to get the attention of the audience that needs him most: disenfranchised Black school kids he affectionately calls "knuckleheads." With brash and evocative poem titles like "If You Fail to Plan, Then Plan to Fail," "Because When I Write, I'm Dangerous," and "I Don't Have to Imagine Being Black," Keith weaves personal verses of navigating the world as a gay Black man with themes of healing and empowerment. Energetic, enthusiastic, and empathetic, Keith is a veteran of the slam poetry circuit, and one can imagine him commanding the stage like he commands this audiobook. *B.P.*

Harper Audio 1.5 hrs. Unabridged Ages 14+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780063296084 $19.29

Energetic, enthusiastic, and empathetic.

THE DOOR IN LAKE MALLION: The Brindlewatch Quintet, Book 2

S.M. Beiko
Read by Paul Van Dyck

With his versatile voice, narrator Paul Van Dyck takes listeners to the magical world of Lake Mallion. The second book in the Brindlewatch Quintet explores the world of 15-year-old Dunstan Cord. Dunstan has just been diagnosed with macular degeneration. Determined not to let his diagnosis quash his dreams, he decides to run away to become a singing sensation in the theater. But before he can leave, his ex-boyfriend abducts him and throws him overboard into Lake Mallion. Dunstan sinks to the bottom of the lake, where a door to a magical world opens. Van Dyck portrays Dunstan in a charming voice that conveys the teen's youth and vulnerability. He provides the other characters with unique voices, as well. *A.M.*

ECW Press 14 hrs. Unabridged Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781778523625 $23.99

I AM THE SWARM

Hayley Chewins
Read by Hayley Chewins

In Nell's family young women receive magic at the age of 15. Hayley Chewins narrates her novel in verse in quiet tones that make this remarkable story seem perfectly normal. Chewins's native South African accent helps listeners imagine the Cape Town setting where Nell's mother shifts her age from one day to the next and her sister is institutionalized for self-harm as she tries to release the music flowing through her veins. Chewins emphasizes the story's poetic rhythms, calming the tension when Nell generates insects that reveal her emotions. Ladybugs reflect her joy at playing piano, but later an angry swarm of wasps bursts from her when her piano teacher attempts to sexualize their relationship. Evocative imagery illuminates the unpredictability that surrounds Nell as she faces and owns her feelings. *S.W.*

Listening Library 4 hrs. Unabridged Ages 14+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217019274 $15.00
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217019281 $38.00

WHEN THE BONES SING

Ginny Myers Sain
Read by Amanda Stribling

Amanda Stribling's Southern accent evokes the Ozarks background of 17-year-old Dove Warner. Stribling also captures the horror Dove faces when she—like others affected by her family's curse—hears the bones of murdered people calling out for her to discover their burial places. Stribling's tone becomes calmer when Dove spends time with her best friend, Lo, until he expresses his own feelings of being haunted by those who have been killed. Dove manages to disregard the lurid tales of townsfolk until the killing increases. Stribling adds tension as Dove and Lo become more determined to learn who—or what—is responsible. Stribling's narration maximizes the atmospheric setting, lyrical writing, and many twists and turns of this audiobook. *S.W.*

Listening Library 10 hrs. Unabridged Ages 14+
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9798217017010 $25.00

RHINO'S RUN

Robert Lipsyte
Read by Gary Tiedemann

Gary Tiedemann gives voice to "Rhino" Rhinehart, the featured character in Lipsyte's timely, troubling coming-of-age novel. Because of an impulsive punch, the junior captain of the football team finds himself keeping a journal as part of a school therapy group. Tiedemann delivers Rhino's words in the voice of a teen who is attempting honesty and beginning to question who he wants to be. Unique voices bring other characters to life as Rhino quotes them. Josh, the boy Rhino punched, arrogantly tries to lead the group. Keith uses snarky comments to cover up his pain and isolation. Ms. L, the leader of the group, sounds patient and compassionate. The coach barks harshly to encourage conflict over teamwork. There's plenty of food for thought for listeners as Rhino searches for his path to change. *N.E.M.*

Harper Audio 4.5 hrs. Unabridged Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063343908 $18.99

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Young Adult Reviews
audiofilemagazine.com

ONE STEP FORWARD

Marcie Flinchum Atkins
Read by Chanté McCormick

Atkins's historical audiobook novel-in-verse shines a light on an important chapter of American history, beginning with the 1913 Women's March and ending with the 1920 ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. Chanté McCormick gives the historical, mostly forgotten, Matilda Young a compelling voice. Matilda's voice gains confidence and strength as she grows from a shy 14-year-old, when the Women's March renews interest in women's suffrage, to a committed worker for the cause who becomes the youngest suffragist to be arrested and serve jail time. McCormick's even tempo and smooth delivery make it easy to follow the extensive author's notes, including biographical information on the historical figures. Download the accompanying pdf for valuable resources, such as an extensive timeline, bibliography, and author sources. *N.E.M.*

Harper Audio 4 hrs. Unabridged Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063339358 $23.99

McCormick gives the historical, mostly forgotten, Matilda Young a compelling voice.

A LANGUAGE OF DRAGONS

S.F. Williamson
Read by Henrietta Meire

Henrietta Meire shows remarkable vocal range in this audiobook featuring multiple human and dragon languages and accents. Vivian aims for an internship studying dragon languages, but when her parents are arrested as rebels, she sets free a dragon that starts a civil war. Desperate, she accepts a job as a code breaker to help the war effort and is tasked with deciphering the one dragon language that has eluded scholars. Meire narrates primarily with an English accent but easily adopts several other European accents to voice Vivian and the dragons as they converse. Dragon voices are lower, carefully paced, and intimidating. Meire voices human politicians with unwavering rigidity, enhancing their draconian demands. Meire's easy banter amplifies the slow-burn romance. *A.K.R.*

Harper Audio 12.75 hrs. Unabridged Ages 14+
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063353830 $27.99

SIXTEEN SOULS: Sixteen Souls, Book 1

Rosie Talbot
Read by Joe Pitts

Joe Pitts narrates a queer teen horror novel with some supernatural and romantic elements. Sixteen-year-old double amputee Charlie Frith doesn't have any friends except for ghosts only he can see. But when those ghosts begin disappearing, he's forced to work with the mysterious new boy, Sam, to save them. Pitts captures Charlie's grumpy wariness at his awkward situation—he's an outcast at school who is reluctant to trust the advances of the cool new kid. While Sam has his own secrets, Pitts portrays him as basically well adjusted. Listeners who are sensitive to depictions of violent death and torture should take care, but, overall, Pitts does a good job with these genuinely scary and gruesome scenes, maintaining balance in the story. *K.M.P.*

Scholastic Audiobooks 9.75 hrs. Unabridged Ages 12+
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781546154259 $27.99
Library Ed.: ISBN 9781546154266 $83.99

In the Studio: *Whale Eyes*

By Lisa Taylor

***AudioFile* spoke with author and documentarian James Robinson and producer Iris McElroy about the audiobook adaptation of James's memoir for middle-grade readers, *Whale Eyes*.**

AudioFile: We appreciate audiobooks that add a new dimension to the medium. Transforming an extensively illustrated print book about a visual disability (which you endearingly call "whale eyes") into an audiobook was a bold undertaking. When you wrote the book, did you already have a commitment to publish in the audio format as well? Were you apprehensive about the challenge?

James Robinson: So much of the evolution of *Whale Eyes* from film to book to audiobook has been about finding a dynamic way for the story to resonate in each medium. In the original film, I enabled the audience to experience the world through my jumpy alternating vision. In the physical book, I frustrate fluent readers as they struggle to make their way through text that has been intentionally made difficult to decipher. I thought about the audiobook quite a bit while I was writing, and my interest was to push this form in new ways. And as is so often the case, the biggest roadblocks became the ripest opportunities, including sharing recordings of the candid responses of those who were trying to decipher the text with no idea of how to tackle what was in their hands.

AF: James, as a child who had difficulty reading, you listened to a lot of audiobooks. What did you want to bring to *Whale Eyes* that was missing in the books/audiobooks of your youth?

Author James Robinson

JR: I wanted to convey that an audiobook is a perfectly acceptable way to consume a book. That there is no shame. Also, that as an author, I care just as much about listeners' experiences as I do those who read print copies of the book. It's not a secondary experience or an afterthought.

I also wanted to keep in mind that some listeners would follow along in the print book as they listened to the words read aloud to them. I wanted to ensure that the additions that I made to the audiobook wouldn't distract or disrupt their interactions with the physical copy of the book.

AF: The book uses several clever devices to render the story's images as audio. Whose idea was it to record the confused conversations and reactions of James's friends and family when they try to interpret the world as he sees it? Brilliant!

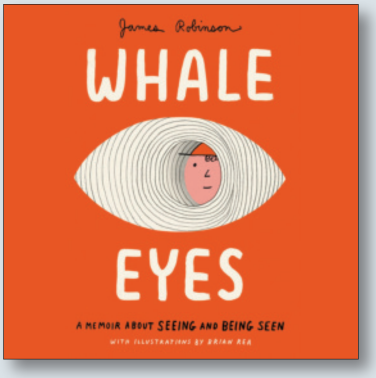
JR: The first time I heard someone read portions of the deconstructed text aloud, I noticed that they sounded exactly like me when I was a child struggling to read. And most unexpectedly, I suddenly found myself in the role of reading coach, encouraging them not to run away. Hearing my AP English teacher genuinely struggling to read, just as I had in first grade, resonated in a way that I knew needed to be included in the audiobook. As I filmed more teachers, students, and parents reading the book, their collective voices brought the freshness of the experience to life. I brought this up with Iris, who approached this project with such an open mind and eagerness to experiment. I was so lucky to have such a great partner.

Iris McElroy: This was all James! We had multiple conversations about adapting the visual elements of the book before and during recording. We wanted the audiobook to be as accessible as possible for listeners with visual conditions, which meant stepping outside the box in terms of classic audiobook production. Right off the bat, James came to

Photo by Susie Post Rust

WHALE EYES: A Memoir About Seeing and Being Seen

James Robinson
Read by James Robinson


James Robinson
WHALE
EYES
A MEMOIR ABOUT SEEING AND BEING SEEN
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRIAN REA

Author and narrator James Robinson combines his documentary filmmaking skills and familiarity with audiobooks to render his experience with serious visual disability in audio. Sound effects immerse the listener in Robinson's memories, like the ticking of the school clock as impatient classmates wait while he struggles to read. Slow pacing reflects the gravity of each memory. He sometimes inserts the confused conversations of friends and family who are puzzling out images of the world as he sees it. Other times, he provides insightful descriptions of images. He shares the difficulties associated with what he calls "whale eyes," the extraordinary help of his mother, and his eventual academic and professional success. Robinson's caring outlook and advice on society, specifically the disability community, are, unsurprisingly, visionary. *L.T.*

Listening Library 3.5 hrs. Unabridged Ages 10+
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9798217018239 $15.00
Library Ed.: ISBN 9798217018246 $38.00

> *Robinson's caring outlook and advice are, unsurprisingly, visionary.*

the table with a clear idea of what he wanted this to sound like. I deferred to him often during this process since this is his experience and he is such an avid audiobook listener. I loved including these clips because it felt like a call back to the videos that he produced with the *New York Times*, which I thought were impressive. After our initial recording, James worked independently to record his family and friends and sent us the clips to include in the edit. This was a true collaboration!

AF: Iris, there's a ticking clock to convey the uncomfortable feeling that young James experienced while classmates waited for him to finish any task requiring reading. The effects in *Whale Eyes* are perfectly placed. How do you decide what's enough? What's too much?

IM: While we both had thoughts on the design during preproduction, the full sound production ideas came together during the recording process. I don't know if there's a hard-and-fast rule to deciding when sound design is too much; I think a lot of it's based on a feeling. My thought is if the design overpowers the performance or distracts from the storytelling, then it needs to be dialed back. I had the pleasure of directing James, and we would often stop and discuss sound design ideas during recording. I think because James is a also producer, a lot of these ideas came together organically. He already had an innate sense of what he wanted, and there were moments when we discussed adding music here or cutting a clip or lines there.

AF: James, *Whale Eyes* is classified as a "middle-grade" book; however, much of the book focuses on your experiences as a documentarian and your adult life—although you're still quite young! You seem to have found a "sweet spot"—a book that is relevant to children *and* adults. Was that intentional?

JR: I always viewed my audience for this work as similar to the audience of the film *Whale Eyes*, which I made for *New York Times Opinion*. It would certainly need to be accessible to middle-grade readers, but I also knew that it could break the traditional age boundaries. So much of this book is about rewriting the story that we tell ourselves about differences and disabilities. And that's a process that is universal but happens at many different ages.

I've had numerous reminders of how important the adult audience is, including when my first-grade teacher read the book said, "Oh, if I'd only read this when I had you as a student, it would have changed the way I taught you."

AF: Did you consult with the illustrator, Brian Rea, to ensure that you conveyed the right message for each image from the book?

JR: So much of the process with Brian felt like we were always seeing more than what was simply on the page. I wrote out ideas, and he came back with sketches. Then I provided feedback, and he refined. That's how it worked practically, but what made the process extraordinary was seeing Brian layer meaning and convey key emotions within the economy of a few simple lines. The illustration descriptions I put together for the audiobook are in many ways a thank you to Brian for the depth and care he put into telling this story. ■

Illustration from *Whale Eyes*

Illustration © Penguin Workshop/Brian Rea

ALL THE BLUES IN THE SKY
Renée Watson
Read by Bahni Turpin

Bahni Turpin delivers a heartbreaking performance of this middle-grade story about grief and healing. On Sage's 13th birthday, her best friend is killed in a hit-and-run accident. Doing the best she can to process her trauma, Sage connects with others through group counseling. Turpin's performance treats the material with respect, which listeners will appreciate. The varied emotions of each group member show that grief has stages and involves different connections with different people. Sage's complex thoughts and memories illuminate how certain aspects of death are easier to accept, while other aspects are more difficult. But shining moments of hope break through in this short yet robust performance. *G.M.*

Bloomsbury Publishing 2.25 hrs. Unabridged Ages 10+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781547612840 $15.75

ONE WRONG STEP
Jennifer A. Nielsen
Read by Harry McEntire

In this suspenseful story narrated by Harry McEntire, 12-year-old Atlas Wade and his father are on a team that is attempting to be the first to scale Mount Everest. A rival team of Nazi climbers is also on the mountain. McEntire's tenor voice and English accent enliven Atlas, who is angry at his father for taking him climbing when he's still grieving the death of his mother. Tension rises, and the pace picks up as Atlas grows to suspect that a Nazi spy may attempt to sabotage his team's effort. Suspense increases even more when Atlas, his teammate Maggie, and their Sherpa guide must rescue other teammates who become buried in an avalanche. McEntire fully captures the moments of danger, wonder, and mutual trust in this action-packed survival adventure. *S.D.B.*

Scholastic Audiobooks 7 hrs. Unabridged Ages 8+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781546151333 $27.99
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9781546151340 $83.99

AYANA NDOUM TAKES THE STAGE: The Kids in Mrs. Z's Class, Book 6
Kekla Magoon
Read by Sanya Simmons

Sanya Simmons narrates the sixth installment in this eighteen-book series, each written by a different award-winning author. Ayana Ndoum is a shy, quiet student who usually does not stand out among her wacky third-grade classmates. While Simmons individualizes students and adults so that listeners can clearly grasp personalities and relationships, her primary focus is on Ayana's internal battles. All Ayana's fears come to the fore when she's the last one to decide on her act for the class talent show. Much of the plot focuses on Ayana's doubts and insecurities, but Simmons also delivers her spectacular breakthrough onstage. *S.W.*

Hachette Audio 1.25 hrs. Unabridged Ages 6+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668646595 $14.99

AWAY
Megan E. Freeman
Read by Andre Bellido, Michael Crouch, Angel Pean, Alejandra Reynoso, Eunice Wong

A full cast performs this mysterious companion story to *Alone*. A looming threat forces thousands in Colorado to flee for their safety. Confined in "temporary" shelters for years, four kids seek out the truth behind their evacuation. The story unfolds through poems, newspaper reports, journal entries, and screenplays. Eunice Wong provides further context narrating radio announcements. Alejandra Reynoso gives a youthful but determined voice to the aspiring journalist Harmony. Angel Pean brings quiet focus to future doctor Ashanti, while Andre Bellido narrates as Grandin, an introspective teen who is afraid for his father, who stayed behind. Michael Crouch balances worry and determination as he voices Teddy, an aspiring documentary filmmaker who uses his talents behind the camera to help them all discover what's going on. *E.E.C.*

Simon & Schuster Audio 4.25 hrs. Unabridged Ages 10+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668131787 $17.99

THE UNDEAD FOX OF DEADWOOD FOREST
Aubrey Hartman
Read by Marisa Calin

AUBREY HARTMAN
THE UNDEAD FOX OF DEADWOOD FOREST

Narrator Marisa Calin has a voice made for children's audiobooks. Full of wonder, Calin addresses listeners directly, introducing the cast, adding backstory, and warning when things might get a little dark. Clare is the undead fox that guides souls to the afterlife. Calin voices him with meticulous articulation and a disgruntled air. Clare particularly dislikes badgers, so when Gingersnipes's soul arrives, he's quick to usher her away. But Gingersnipes can't leave Deadwood Forest despite Clare's best efforts. Calin portrays Gingersnipes with a higher pitch and a slowly increasing tone of frustration as Clare makes it abundantly clear how weird and unwelcome she is. With subtle sound effects added, listeners will find themselves immersed in the eternal autumn of Deadwood. *A.K.R.*

Hachette Audio 6.5 hrs. Unabridged Ages 8+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9781668647448 $24.99

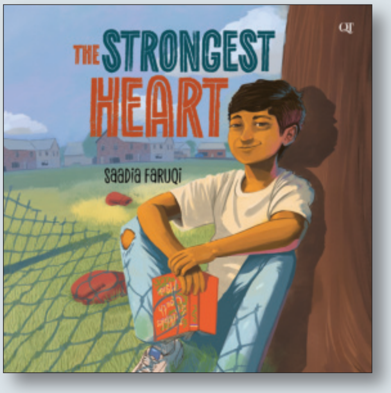
> *Narrator Marisa Calin has a voice made for children's audiobooks.*

THE LEGENDARY SCARLETT AND BROWNE: Scarlett and Browne, Book 3
Jonathan Stroud
Read by Sophie Aldred

For a third and final time, Sophie Aldred's narration takes listeners into the dystopian world of outlaws Scarlett McCain and Albert Browne. Aldred's depictions of the many characters define and distinguish them fluidly, especially the main characters. At the same time, Aldred builds the tension in several ways: There are the action-filled moments of robbery and ambushes and the ongoing struggles with societal injustices such as the slave trade. All these add to the heroes' personal quests as Scarlett seeks to find her younger brother and Albert returns to the secret prison in which he was trained. The climax leads to a satisfying series resolution. *S.W.*

Listening Library 13.25 hrs. Unabridged Ages 10+
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780593611814 $27.50
Library Ed.: ISBN 9780593611821 $75.00

THE STRONGEST HEART
Saadia Faruqi
Read by Imran Sheikh



Imran Sheikh's narration captures the interiority of 13-year-old Mohammad (Mo) Mirza, who works hard to stay cheerful despite his father's rages. Sheikh delivers the humor, intelligence, gift for storytelling, and sarcasm that buoy Mo as he deals with his father's paranoid schizophrenia; the absence of his mother, who has chosen to work in a distant refugee camp; and being thrown into a new life in Texas with an aunt and cousin he hardly knows. Sheikh believably renders the support of his aunt, a devout Muslim, and the engaging awkwardness of his cousin, Rayyan. Finally, Sheikh shows Mo's psychological fragility in the face of bullying at school and his father's episodes at home. This compelling listen is filled with heart and humor. *S.W.*

Harper Audio 8 hrs. Unabridged Ages 10+
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063115880 $24.99

This compelling listen is filled with heart and humor.

MOUNTAIN UPSIDE DOWN
Sara Ryan
Read by Elena Rey

In a youthful voice, Elena Rey introduces an Oregon school and library that are in danger of shutting down. Listeners meet bright, empathic 13-year-old Alex and her beloved grandmother, a retired librarian she's lived with since her mother's death. Rey's scenes of library staff, patrons, and youth council kids are delightfully rendered. Listeners are privy to Alex's nervous confession of her feelings for her friend, champion swimmer PJ, and their budding romance. The teens are heartbroken when PJ's mom's move sends him to a different school. Rey portrays Alex's success in coping with challenges, especially when her grandmother is diagnosed with dementia. Depictions of aging, sexuality, and blended families, along with lighthearted wordplay, make this a memorable audiobook for listeners of all ages. *S.G.B.*

Listening Library 6 hrs. Unabridged Ages 10+
Trade: ISBN 9798217019090 $20.00
Library Ed.: ISBN 9798217019106 $50.00

BEACON OF HOPE: The Life of Barack Obama
Doreen Rappaport
Read by Leon Nixon

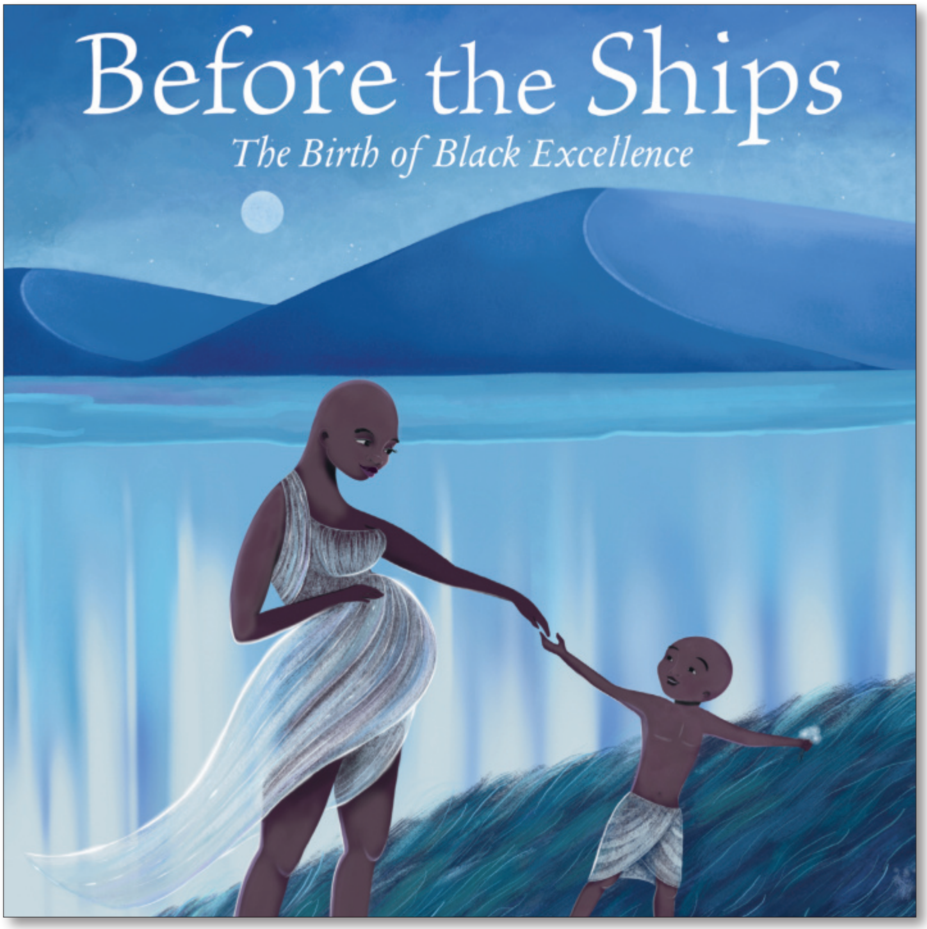
Leon Nixon deftly recounts the endlessly fascinating life of Barack Obama, beginning with magnificent descriptions of his early life in Hawaii and Indonesia, and his sadness at first encountering world poverty. Young listeners meet "Barry," who'd been insulted by classmates but later, as an adult, felt he'd come home when he arrived in Chicago. An African visit to his birth father is vividly described, and the love of his impressive American mother and supportive grandparents guides him to his astounding success. Nixon's delivery is assured and clear as Obama graduates from Harvard, works 10-hour days as a community organizer, speaks to the Democratic Convention, and, finally, becomes president. Audio impressively summarizes Obama's accomplishments, as well as his life with Michelle and their daughters, Sasha and Malia. *S.G.B.*

Hachette Audio 30 mins. Unabridged Ages 4-6
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781668647318 $4.99

THE SQUAD: The Tryout, Book 2
Christina Soontornvat
Read by Grace Li, Vaneh Assadourian, Ashley Austin Morris, and a Full Cast

As the story opens with Christina's family eating out, the ensemble of narrators provides a realistic delivery. Later, believing that eighth grade will be her best year yet, Christina persuades her two best friends to try out for cheerleading, even after the heartbreak of not making the squad in their last attempt. Grace Li shines at conveying the wide range of emotions Christina navigates over the course of the year as she faces difficult challenges. These include the end of her parents' marriage and dealing with old and new friendships. Complications ensue when Christina makes the cheering squad but neither of her friends does. The author's note illustrates the universality of the themes in this fictionalized memoir. *E.J.F.*

Scholastic Audiobooks 2.25 hrs. Unabridged Ages 8+
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781546137184 $24.99
Library Ed.: ISBN 9781546137191 $74.99


Before the Ships
The Birth of Black Excellence

BEFORE THE SHIPS: The Birth of Black Excellence
Maisha Oso
Read by Kim Staunton

Narrator Kim Staunton communicates a buoyant pride in this very short story highlighting the contributions of Africans before the slave trade began. Original music and gentle sound effects of waves and wildlife accompany a storied list of African accomplishments in the fields of art, music, warfare, science, and math. Staunton's fluid delivery highlights the author's careful choice of words, which occasionally rhyme but never sound forced. This is an uplifting account that does not end in Africa but emphasizes the continued worth of the African Diaspora. It speaks directly to that audience but is a worthy listen for all children. A second track has page-turn prompts for listening with the print version. Maisha Oso delivers her own author's note. *L.T.*

Scholastic Audiobooks 14 mins. Unabridged Ages 4-6
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9781546120841 $6.99
Library Ed.: ISBN 9781546120889 $20.99

ORRIS AND TIMBLE: LOST AND FOUND: Orris and Timble, Book 2
Kate DiCamillo
Read by Mark Bramhall

Mark Bramhall narrates an adventure about unlikely friends: Orris, a rat, and Timble, an owl. Bramhall's deep voice, distinct enunciations, and gentle rhythms are a perfect match. Bramhall's portraits are well defined for the young, enthusiastic Timble and the older, grumbly Orris. Bramhall deepens his characterizations of the friends' developing relationship, which faces a challenge when Timble doesn't appear for his nightly visit. Disgruntled Orris finally reveals his feelings of loneliness and disappointment, and Timble returns with a story of being lost. Finally, the two perch close to each other on the barn roof, restored and renewed in their friendship. *S.W.*

KATE DiCAMILLO
ORRIS AND TIMBLE
Lost and Found
CARMEN MOK

Listening Library 17 mins. Unabridged Ages 6+
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780593861882 $6.00
Library Ed.: ISBN 9780593861899 $22.00

A BANQUET FOR CECILIA: How Cecilia Chiang Revolutionized Chinese Food in America
Julie Leung
Read by Cindy Kay

Classical music provides an enjoyable background to the story of Cecilia Chiang. She first watched cooking in her family home in China and then was introduced to its varied cuisine as she crossed the country during WWII. Later, she immigrated to the U.S. Cindy Kay's soft voice transmits Cecilia's dedication to the dishes she loves and grows stronger and more determined as she finds herself wanting to share them. The accuracy of Kay's accent and the descriptions of dishes as Chiang opens San Francisco's Mandarin, the first restaurant to treat Chinese food as fine dining, awaken listeners' taste buds, provide authenticity, and create appreciation for Chiang's accomplishments. *E.J.F.*

Hachette Audio 15 mins. Unabridged Ages 4-6
Trade: ISBN 9781668647394 $4.99

SUN BIRD: The Amazing Journey of the Arctic Tern
Lindsay Moore
Read by Sura Siu

Sura Siu's narration soars—it's as light and airy as the high-flying Arctic terns on which this nonfiction audiobook focuses. She takes listeners into the sunny summer world of one such bird, who snatches fish to feed his chicks, fiercely drives off predators, and finally leads them to fly for a month over the ocean at summer's end. Siu's gentle narration stresses the lyricism of the author's writing. Her careful phrasing allows listeners to glide and drift until they finally come to rest at journey's end. Her voice takes on a more grounded tone as she delivers the astounding fact-filled descriptions of the terns and their annual migration. *S.W.*

Harper Audio 9 mins. Unabridged Ages 4-6
Trade Ed.: ISBN 9780063428539 $19.99

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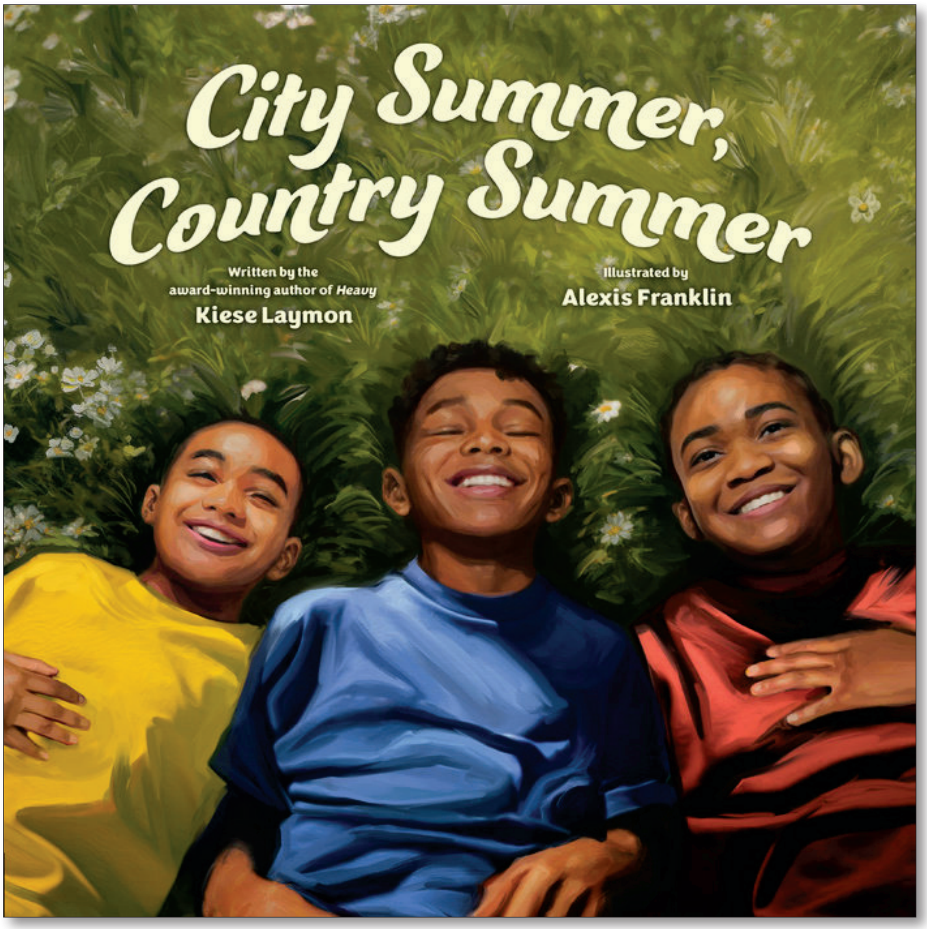
CITY SUMMER, COUNTRY SUMMER

Kiese Laymon
Read by Samuel Eubanks

Newcomer Samuel Eubanks brings an unstudied earnestness to his narration of this story of Black boys and bygone Mississippi summers. This is the first children's book by MacArthur Fellow Kiese Laymon. The unnamed protagonist spends summers with his grandmother; right next door is a boy who is visiting the country from New York. Eubanks sounds just a few years older than these two boys, who are both fascinated by and a little afraid of each other until a walk in the woods and a game of Marco Polo in the garden show that they speak a common language. Alexis Franklin's lush paintings will keep listeners engaged as Eubanks navigates the story. Eubanks's delivery embraces these boys, both different and alike, and beckons listeners to join them. *V.S.*

Listening Library 7 mins. Unabridged Ages 6+
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593683668 $5.00
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9780593683675 $22.00


City Summer, Country Summer
Written by the award-winning author of Heavy
Kiese Laymon
Illustrated by
Alexis Franklin

FARMER EVA'S GREEN GARDEN LIFE

Jacqueline Briggs Martin
Read by Eva Kaminsky, Eva Sommaripa, Jacqueline Briggs Martin

Eva Kaminsky gently introduces little listeners to Farmer Eva, whose understanding of the "brown underground" helps her garden thrive. As Kaminsky delivers the story, her musical tone makes the most of the author's rhythmic phrasing. Youngsters will learn about the contributions made by "all the helpful critters . . . and the microbes too," and the careful inclusion of children in the collage illustrations ensures that little ones know they can also be part of the process. Kaminsky's bubbly treatment extends to the recipes and additional facts in the back matter, which she delivers with as much enthusiasm as she does the story. Farmer Eva Sommaripa and author Martin deliver their own separate notes, each with pleasant clarity. Healthy soil leads to happy eaters—and listeners. *V.S.*

Live Oak Media 15 mins. Unabridged Ages 4-6
Book & Recording: DD ISBN 9781430145639 $12.95
(also CD)

GIRLS ON THE RISE

Amanda Gorman
Read by Amanda Gorman

The youngest ever inaugural poet, Amanda Gorman, brings to life her powerful poem and message to all girls. It's a love letter to girls using any pronoun, from any culture, and with any level of ambition, saying that they have the means to make change, inspire and support others, and achieve their goals. Gorman's narration is motivating and vigorous. Delivered at a steady pace, this short, 4-minute poem provides just enough inspiration to be thought-provoking and start a conversation. This would make a great gift to any girl—whether she aspires to do great things or is still discovering her path. *G.M.*

GIRLS on the RISE
AMANDA GORMAN
LOVEIS WISE

Listening Library 4 mins. Unabridged Ages 4-6
Trade Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217019212 $5.00
Library Ed.: DD ISBN 9798217019229 $22.00

WHALES IN THE CITY

Nancy F. Castaldo
Read by Tara Novie

Tara Novie's youthful voice reflects a sense of wonder for the topic of this audiobook: whales. While her bright delivery contrasts with the somberness of those majestic animals that were pushed out of former habitats by human expansion, she does convey a sense of hope as the Hudson River flows clear again and the whales return. In the second part of the audiobook, Novie's tone becomes more grounded as she details historical and environmental insights relating to the Hudson Highlands River's troubled past and activism that led to the 1972 Clean Water Act. Novie conveys the urgency of this environmental issue and humanity's role in shaping an optimistic future. *M.F.*

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Celebrate Pride with Audiobooks

By Laura Sackton

With so many amazing narrators bringing queer stories to life, it's easy to celebrate Pride with audiobooks. Here you'll find audiobooks on the history of Pride as well as audiobooks about queer history more broadly. These audiobooks, along with the performances that animate them, all embody the spirit of Pride: joy and struggle intertwined.

BEFORE WE WERE TRANS: A New History of Gender

Kit Hayam, read by the author

This incisive global history of transgender, intersex, and queer experiences, both lived and fictional, encourages listeners to reexamine the past with fresh eyes. The author's rich work challenges the centrality of whiteness, Western ideologies, and the "burden of proof" in explorations of gender history and identities, advocating for an inclusive, more expansive understanding. An outstanding entry into LGBTQIA+ history.

Hachette Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

THE BOOK OF PRIDE: LGBTQ Heroes Who Changed the World

Mason Funk, read by Mason Funk, Robin Miles, Eileen Stevens, Kevin R. Free, Charles Constant, Rick Adamson

The founder and executive director of OUTWORDS introduces and contextualizes each of the more than 70 first-person accounts of liberation, disruption, survival, and other experiences collected by the organization to document LGBTQ+ history. Reaching back to the pre-Stonewall era, the whole offers an intersectional tapestry of causes gender, sexual orientation, race, and class identities. This potent oral history provides fresh and inclusive details of the LGBTQ+ community as seen by their elders.

Harper Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

THE GAY REVOLUTION: The Story of the Struggle

Lillian Faderman, read by Donna Postel

Faderman's comprehensive history of the LGBTQ movement stands as a fascinating, powerful, and impressive audiobook. As narrator for this massive production, Donna Postel delivers a consistent and lively performance. The work provides in-depth and wide-ranging research, including interviews with many of the movement's influential people.

Tantor Media Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

RAINBOW WARRIOR: My Life in Color

Gilbert Baker, read by Graham Halstead

Graham Halstead's narration creates a window onto LGBTQ history in the U.S. Rainbow Pride flag creator Gilbert Baker's posthumously published memoir shares the events, internal politics, and people behind the now-ubiquitous symbol of the LGBTQ rights movement. Thoughtfully edited fragments are sewn into an engaging narrative that ranges from the 1970s through the 1990s. Halstead blurs the line between author and narrator as he ably adopts Baker's conversational storytelling style.

Tantor Media Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

REAL QUEER AMERICA: LGBT Stories from Red States

Samatha Allen, read by the author

Journalist Samantha Allen's earnest tones reflect her journey to a deeper understanding and greater appreciation of the reasons that queer-identified persons build lives in Georgia, Texas, Utah, Indiana, and other red states. This thoughtful, candid account implores listeners to challenge divisive regional stereotypes based on political affiliations and, instead, work toward constructive, community-building dialogue.

Hachette Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD

THE STONEWALL READER

The New York Public Library [Eds.], Edmund White [Fore.], read by a Full Cast

A vibrant chorus of more than 20 voices narrates this accessible anthology focusing on LGBTQ experiences before, during, and after the Stonewall uprising of 1969. Told through a diverse array of first-person narratives, interviews, articles, and more, the anthology creates a kaleidoscopic view of the early gay liberation movement.

Penguin Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed.: DD
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Library Ed.: DD

KIT HEYAM
BEFORE WE WERE TRANS
A NEW HI
THE BOOK OF PRIDE
LGBTQ HEROES
E WORLD
NK
Rainbow WARRIOR
My Life in Color
Gil
Real Queer AMERICA
LGBT STORIES FROM RED STATES
ALLEN
StoryCorps
OutLoud
Stories from the LGBTQ community, gathered by StoryCorps and heard on NPR
Hosted by Ari Shapiro
Featuring Dave Isay

STORYCORPS: OUTLOUD: Voices of the LGBTQ Community From Across America

Dave Isay et al., read by Ari Shapiro [Host], StoryCorps Participants

This collection of firsthand accounts from StoryCorps is both heartrending and heartwarming. These personal narratives from the LGBTQI community—which recount their coming-out experiences with a family member—will have listeners laughing and crying at the ensuing surprises and tragedies. Additionally, this collection includes an audio documentary of the Stonewall riots.

HighBridge Audio Unabridged
Trade Ed: DD

Editors' Note: Find more Pride recommendations in our curated list: **audiofilemagazine.com/lists/celebrate-pride-with-audiobooks/**

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R.O.

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Listening With . . .

Patti Callahan Henry

Author

Mountain Brook, Alabama

Author Patti Callahan Henry knew exactly who she wanted to narrate her latest audiobook, *The Story She Left Behind*. “I came straight to the publisher and said, I really want Julia Whelan for this book. Julia had read one of my previous novels about 18 years ago, and I always choose her books to listen to. We have been friends through the years and even taught together at writer’s conferences, and I said, this is the book that would be perfect for her voice.” Patti is also an avid audiobook listener. “I have been on the road for the past eight weeks for book tour, and I think I’ve listened to five audiobooks on tour. Audiobooks keep me sane.” And when she’s not on tour? “Oh, I listen when I’m taking a walk, I listen when I’m doing chores around the house. I listen when I’m grocery shopping, I listen in my car. I always have an audiobook going. Always.” *–Josephine Reed*

“I always have an audiobook going. Always.”

PODCAST EPISODE

Listen to an extended version of this interview on AudioFile’s podcast: audiofilemagazine.com/podcast

Editors’ Note: See our review of *The Story She Left Behind* on page 28.

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